The Beginner's Guide to The Mass Effect Beginner's Guide

This Beginner's Guide To Mass Effect™ will serve as a guide for beginning players to the Mass Effect™ trilogy. You may not know a lot about how the games work, or maybe you just want to learn something new. Fear not! We are here to help.

Each game has been individually dissected and disseminated for ease of use. Spoilers will be absolutely avoided, so do not fear of ruining any potential plot points. You will learn what class is right for you, which squadmates best compliment your class or playing style, or maybe you just want to know how to flay people apart with your mind.

So take a peek. Have a gander. Who knows? Maybe you'll learn something new about how to save the galaxy.

You *do* want to save the galaxy, don't you?

Mass Effect Beginner's Guide

Congratulations, [reddit username], on your recent purchase of Mass Effect™ or the Mass Effect™ Trilogy! You may have some questions, some concerns, or maybe you just want to know how the game works. Within this codex you will find information designed to teach you things you may not have realized. Spoilers shall be avoided all over the place, so you needn't worry -- especially if you decide to cheat and read ahead.

1. Character Creation

Who is Shepard?

The very first thing you will do is create your character. You can be a man or a woman, and neither has any combat advantages over the other. You can change your Shepard's first name, but he or she will always be referred to as Shepard. Then, you will be able to pick a personal and military background. These will change dialogue in the game or provide one unique side mission.

But first, you'll have the responsibility to make Shepard's face. Go crazy. Black hair, red eyes, no eye brows, and a nice big scar across the cheek. In space, no one can hear how sexy you look. But, you'll also need to figure out *who* Shepard is, not just what. As stated earlier, you will need a personal and military history.

Personal History

For Personal history, you can pick one of these three, and have these effects:

Spacer	**Colonist**	**Earthborn**
Bonus to Paragon	Small bonus to Both	Bonus to Renegade

Each has a bonus to your Paragon or Renegade points as stated. However, it is *not* required that Earthborn Shepard's to make Renegade choices, nor is that true of Spacers. They merely affect dialogue amongst the people you meet and greet, especially when dealing with people who have known Shepard either personally or heard about his/her exploits.

Military History

Military history is as follows:

War Hero	**Sole Suvivor**	**Ruthless**
Bonus to	Small bonus to	Bonus to

War Hero	Sole Suvivor	Ruthless
Paragon	Both	Renegade

Like with your personal background, it is *not* required to dedicate yourself to Paragon or Renegade decisions based on your history.

Notes

These can be mixed and matched together in whatever combination you wish, and people you meet will speak to you differently based on the background you've selected. But, your character's background will not keep you from completing any major missions or quests.

Note: You will *not* be able to change character customization once you complete initial character creation. Your personal and military history will be referenced throughout all three games, but cannot be changed once you create your character in Mass Effect 1.

by JerziDevil

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2. Class Warfare

Dat Class

There are six classes in Mass Effect; three that are focused on a specialty (biotic, tech, combat) and three that are hybrids representing two disciplines. Once one is selected, *it cannot be changed throughout the duration of the game.*

Soldier

The Soldier is the fully combat-focused class. Soldiers can upgrade all the weapon type skills and is the *only* class that can upgrade the ability to wear heavy armor. Durable in fights, Soldiers are meant to be in the thick of things and deal weapon damage superior to any other class. The soldier talent increases maximum health and awards health regeneration.

Soldiers are the most straight-forward of all the classes, and are the best class for both beginners to the Mass Effect story and the Action-RPG genre in general. They are also great if you only intend to play through the game once. The only weakness of this class is the total reliance on squadmates for tech and biotic powers.

Engineer

The Engineer is a fully tech-focused class, and can only use light armor and pistols. The engineer is best at controlling the battle by disabling the enemy's shields, powers, or even taking control of AI opponents. Engineers are one of the classes the least suited to using straight-forward gun tactics to win. As this class is extremely power-centric, the game may feel very challenging until the most-used powers are upgraded to more powerful levels.

It's generally recommended that only more experienced players use the Engineer class.

Adept

Similar to the Engineer, Adepts are purely biotic focused. Similarly, they can only use light armor and pistols. The adept uses mass effect fields to deal damage or trap opponents, dividing and conquering enemy squads by suspending some and fighting the others. The adept talent reduces recharge time on biotic powers.

For the uninitiated, think of biotic powers as functioning similar to the Force in various Star Wars games. Biotic abilities allow you to warp, throw, lift, and toss enemies about with your mind. And like Engineers once more, it's generally recommended to use the Adept class only if you are more experienced with the game.

Vanguard

Now we get away from the "pureblood" classes, and into the "hybrid" classes. Vanguards possess skills and talents from both biotic and combat roles, and can eventually use shotguns and medium armor. Vanguards are damage dealers, getting in close with a combination of shotgun and biotic attacks. The Vanguard talent increases pistol and shotgun damage.

Vanguards are good for veterans and beginners alike, as the class has skills and talents suited for many different talents.

Infiltrator

The tech/combat hybrid class, Infiltrators are for your sniper friends. The Infiltrator relies on range, hitting enemies with tech-based debuffs and using sniper rifle skills to finish them off. The Infiltrator talent decreases heat buildup in pistols and sniper rifles, allowing for faster and more prolonged firing.

Infiltrators are similar to Vanguards in their popularity with both veterans and beginners. They have a variety of abilities for many situations and give the player a unique experience.

Sentinel

And now for the "wildcard" class. Sentinels are biotic/tech hybrids, and lean toward support roles. Sentinels utilize biotic traps and barriers to protect squadmates, while using tech debuffs to help control the flow of combat. They only use pistols and light armor. The sentinel talent reduces tech and biotic cooldown time and increases pistol damage.

Sentinels are "wildcards" because their powers rely on indirect combat, and will mostly serve to absorb damage with their shield and biotic barrier enhancements. Sentinels may potentially be one of the most difficult classes to use effectively, but can be tremendously hardy in combat once the class is mastered.

Final Notes

One final thing to be aware is that, as you earn achievements/trophies for the various weapon, tech, and biotic skills, future characters made can be given one bonus talent, even if it is not

within their class. This means that, if you were to have unlocked the achievement for using Singularity enough, you could then make a new character with the Soldier class and give them the Singularity talent -- even though Soldiers normally have no biotic abilities. Also note that any bonus talents will *not* replace or remove one of your character's default abilities, so do not fear losing one.

This can be used to give characters an extra ability to increase their versatility in combat, which can be absolutely a godsend for some classes which may have glaring weaknesses (Example: Adepts lack major combat roles, so unlocking the Assault or Sniper Rifle bonus talents can give your Adept greater versatility and combat effectiveness).

by keiichiz28

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3. The Dialogue Wheel

Say "what?" again!

If you've played RPG games before, you may be familiar with being presented conversation response options at various points, which determine how your character will respond to others. These can sometimes give you important distinctions, such as "kill him" or "let him go," and are sometimes may simply be different ways of stating the same thing—"We will fight you no matter what" versus "We will lay down our lives to stop you." Mass Effect uses a conversation system involving a wheel, with up to six options for speech. See below.

This will give you a basic overview of what sections of the Dialogue Wheel do

Generally speaking, options on the left of the wheel delay a conversation's end while options on the right hasten it. It's most common in the game to be presented with only 4 options: the three on the right and the middle left. Often it will simply say "investigate," and clicking it will present you with more options of discussion. In the "investigate" sub-wheel, all choices will delay resolution, give you more information about either current happenings or simple backstory, and can be repeated in case you didn't hear clearly the first time. On the right side of the wheel will be the option to "return" to the previous menu. This can be hard to get used to, but becomes very intuitive after a few minutes of exploration. In time, you might find yourself just knowing which to pick, without even thinking.

In the previous image, two conversation options marked "Friendly" and "Hostile" appear on the left side of the wheel. These options will not always appear; they're reserved for situations where your previous actions will influence what topics you can broach. These are the "blue" (friendly) and "red" (hostile) options the next section will discuss.

Be aware that the wheel is not always a perfect representation of the words that will next come out of Shepard's mouth. Each selection is meant to give a basic tone that Shepard will speak in, so do not be too surprised if what was said is not a verbatim response that you selected.

You will notice that sometimes you may be presented with a blue or red colored dialogue option. All you need to know is that the top right (Paragon) is generally patient and kind, and

is tied to your Charm skill -- the higher it is, the more options will open to you and fewer will be grayed out. Conversely, the bottom right (Renegade) is usually impatient and brash, and is tied to your Intimidate skill similarly to how Charm works. Choosing one will net you points for that side, which will also be discussed in the next section. The “Neutral” option, naturally, will award no points to either side. You may find that one conversation option suits you most of the time, but that’s no reason to lock yourself into one portion of the wheel. Pick what your Shepard would most naturally say, not what the wheel might suggest.

To players wishing to get the most out of the game, it’s usually best to exhaust all options on the left before proceeding to the right side of the wheel. In this way you can learn a great deal about the Mass Effect universe from the people who live in it. If, however, you’re itching for action, there’s no harm done by neglecting the left. Many returning players stay almost exclusively to the right.

A final note: it may seem to you like many conversation options are “right,” but the truth is no one option is better than another. Some options have consequences in-game and some don’t, but the only way to see what happens is to play it out yourself. If curiosity (or regret) overwhelms you, don’t be afraid to reload a save and try the conversation again. Alternately, look online in the Mass Effect Wiki or browse through a ME1 walkthrough on Youtube. For options on the top of the wheel you’d be better off searching Paragon, and for the reverse you should search for a Renegade walthrough.

by Hypersigils

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4. Paragon or Renegade

Which one is right for me?

If you've played role-playing games before, you may be familiar with “karma” systems, such as Fallout 3’s good/evil spectrum or the Fable series’ good/evil/pure/corrupt system. In general, these options usually come up in dialogue options or actions where you decide what approach you’d like to use. These can veer from the extremely polarized (destroy a city or save it) to the more morally ambiguous (sacrifice yourself to save others, or live and save only your family).

Mass Effect has its own system of morality, but it’s more complex than simply "Good versus Evil". In fact, you’ll find that throughout most of the games very few “truly evil” choices are awarded to you. No matter what you decide, Shepard will always wish to protect those he (or she) cares for. No matter what you choose, (s)he will face the universe’s enemies.

Instead, ME introduces a scale of “Paragon” and “Renegade.” This describes how closely your character works with organizations he is part of, or how much he chooses to go his own way. For example, after important missions your character will often have a choice to check in with their leaders. You don’t have to do so; the choice you make adds points to whatever side you choose. It’s best to choose mostly one side, instead of wavering: in some conversations greyed-out topic options can become blue (Paragon) or red (Renegade), signifying their availability. Having a high Renegade score will allow you to choose these red

options, and high Paragon for blue. Some decisions will net you Paragon points; others, Renegade. See the above section for more info.

The tone of your character is up to you. There's no "right" or "wrong" path, since all choices lead to the same end. You may wish to model your Shepard after you, or play as you expect the character would. Paragon options are usually more kind and diplomatic, though they tend not to get the job done as quickly as possible. Renegade options, on the other hand, are usually more self-serving and short-tempered, though they often offer you additional credits.

Be aware that your choices—especially Paragon vs. Renegade—will have an impact on later games, should you choose to import your save. Some options determine whether people will live or die, and others will choose how others will react to you in the future. If you feel it won't damage your enjoyment of the games, you may wish to research your choices before dedicating yourself to one action — or watching one play out and then perhaps reloading a save to try a different way. Also, be aware multiple playthroughs (and 3rd-party save games) are available to you.

An important thing to be aware of: there is no "right" choice. The Mass Effect series is one of morally grey choices, so it may be rare for you to see an option and think "that is unquestionably the right decision." Often a seemingly clear option will turn out differently than you'd hoped—that's life. You won't always make the right decision, but with your help Shepard can still save the galaxy. Good luck, and have fun.

By Hypersigils

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5. Romantic Options

Is Fox News' unqualified consultant right about this blasphemous game?

If you mean "is it possible to romance characters in this game," then yes. If you mean "is this game pornography," the answer is no.

Shepard is a larger-than-life character, and people close to him/her get drawn in. Some fall in love regardless of your efforts. Some warm to you slowly. Some take a lot of effort to romance successfully. Romance for each brings different things, and it's impossible to say which character you'll feel closer to at the get-go. Just start it up with an open mind and see what happens. You may find that "fake" characters have no appeal for you... or you may find some common ground in attraction. Give it a try.

Love interests include Ashley Williams (for a male Shepard), Kaidan Alenko (for a female Shepard), and Liara T'Soni (for either). If none of these appeal to you, don't worry. More options open in subsequent games, and choosing to romance one of the above three or no one at all won't hurt your chances with them. Unless you try cheating, in which case you've got a problem on your hands. Romance "flags" are pretty obvious in ME1. To obtain the option for romance, spend time talking to the character on board the SR-1. After enough time, a situation will quite plainly ask you if you're interested--answer honestly, and the rest is smooth sailing.

For those worried about continuity, let us simply say this: none of these three are available to romance during ME2 (with the slight exception of the Lair of the Shadow Broker DLC, for Liara) so be prepared for either loneliness or serial monogamy. Don't worry: all three return for the third game.

by /u/Hypersigils

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6. The SSV Normandy SR-1

She may not look like much, but she's got it where it counts.

[Here we discuss basic maneuvering of the game world. Everything from finding your way around the Normandy, getting through the galaxy map, and uncovering items -- lockers/"anomalies"/etc]

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7. The M-35 Mako

It's a bird! It's a plane! No, It's an Armored Personnel Carrier!

You will become familiar with the Mako before long. Whereas the Normandy SR-1 is your go-to frigate for the skies and space, you need something with wheels for planetary mobility. That's where the Mako comes in.

The Mako is essentially a mobile tank. It has a machine gun and a Mass Accelerator (basically, a sci-fi rocket launcher) cannon to defend itself, as well as high-tech shields and armor plating. It has omni-gel (for repairing damage) capability and thrusters. Despite these heavy armaments, it's built to be able to scale sheer walls and can fall from almost unlimited heights with minimal damage.

That's how the Mako is advertised, at least. In practice it's much less glorious. Depending on how much exploration you do outside of the main missions, you may find yourself on strange planets quite a bit. You will learn to love small, rolling hills and flat plains. This is because the Mako, while designed to scale cliffs, doesn't make it terribly easy—and there are a LOT of cliffs on non-mission planets. One of the main sources of frustration is the Mako's maximum angle of incline. Imagine a straight vertical line: that's 90 degrees. Tilt it right about 20 degrees: that's as steep as the Mako can go. Any steeper and you lose forward momentum and slide back down. The noise of the engine will often tip you off if you're going up too steeply. Do not use your thrusters: they will propel you backwards and off the mountain side.

Thankfully, the developers were not merciless. Often planets have nice pathways up mountains and valleys that allow you to skirt high places to reach your destination. Though a straight line is the shortest path, you may find it to be the longest in terms of effort and time. Falling even a significant way isn't the end: though some pieces of your Mako on the HUD may turn red (reparable by use of Omni-gel) this is usually not crippling. Even getting stuck is rare: use your thrusters to reorient and save yourself.

In the Mako you'll be given a rudimentary elevation map, visible on your HUD and also in the Map screen. Orange icons will show you locations, item drops and secrets, each described in the previous section. A waypoint can be added that will direct you to wherever you've placed it. When you've reached your location, disembark and have at it. Note: by the map will be an indication of how hazardous the planet's atmosphere is—denoted as levels one through three—and too much exposure outside of the Mako can be fatal. Reenter to reset the exposure meter.

In combat, the machine gun is best used to wear down enemy shields and the cannon to dish out heavy damage. The cannon has a recharge time (and the machine gun overheats), so it's best to be tactical. Being caught in an interval can be deadly. When it recharges, however, the cannon is capable of blowing smaller units away simply by firing at their feet. Often cover can be ignored in this way. However, your enemies have weapons too: small-grade fire is usually safe to be ignored, but slow-moving projectiles can tear apart your shields. And when the shields go down, they take quite a while to fully recharge. Once down, the hull takes direct fire and will eventually be destroyed -- which results in a Game Over. If you see the damage icon turning dark red all over, get out. It won't explode with you outside of it, but when it starts sparking that's to let you know it's down to the wire. Don't re-enter until you're sure all enemies are dealt with. If you can find cover, another option is to repair the hull which freezes your controls and costs Omni-gel until repairs are completed. This is understandably dangerous to do while sustaining fire. How much damage is repaired is contingent on who in your squad has the respective skill.

The tenets of Mako-combat are these: evade shots, take out the small units with the cannon, and don't be afraid to retreat. Your shields recharge, but they don't get reinforcements. Here's a tip: enemies have a habit of shooting at where you were 3 seconds ago. Abuse that by hopping over rockets or making them aim into the sky. You can also use them to pop in and out of cover. In a pinch, you can always slam into enemies: though collisions will damage you, they're sometimes worth it to take out a pesky (small) enemy or to see someone go flying. If all else fails, the Mako can be used as cover for a disembarked squad—though be careful not to get into it when it's low on health around enemies.

For those wishing to maximize XP gain, wearing down enemies with the Mako and then disembarking to finish them off is a well-loved strategy. More will be covered in the next section.

By Hypersigils

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8. Leveling Up

What to expect when you're expecting (to level up).

Shepard and the squad will gain experience points and level up by killing enemies, completing missions and finding new info for the Codex. Experience is given to each member of the party, regardless of whether or not they're currently in the squad. The amount of experience gained is dependent on the level of Shepard's party. The party's level also affects the level of loot that you'll find in the galaxy. For each level gained, each member of the squad gets points to spend on their talents.

Points are gained in these intervals:

Shepard

- Levels 1-5 will give 3 points per level.
- Levels 6-35 will give 2 points per level.
- Level 36-60 will give only 1 point per level up.

Squadmates

- Levels 1-20 will give 2 points per level.
- Levels 21-60 will give only 1 point per level.

Required XP Per Level

The chart below will show when level ups occur based on total XP required. Adding all previous entries in the third column will tell you how much XP is required to reach the next level. Example: to figure out how much XP you'll need to reach level 10 immediately after you reach level 9, combine all the increments from 9 on down to 1, which will mean you'll need 900 XP to level up.

Level	Total XP Required	Incremental Increase	Level	Total XP Required	Incremental Increase
1	0	+100	31	60200	+300
2	100	+100	32	65200	+300
3	300	+100	33	70500	+300
4	600	+100	34	76100	+300
5	1000	+100	35	82000	+300
6	1500	+100	36	88300	+300
7	2100	+100	37	95000	+400
8	2800	+100	38	102100	+400
9	3600	+100	39	109600	+400
10	4500	+100	40	117600	+500
11	5500	+100	41	126100	+500
12	6600	+100	42	135100	+500
13	7800	+100	43	144700	+600
14	9100	+100	44	155000	+700

Level	Total XP Required	Incremental Increase	Level	Total XP Required	Incremental Increase
15	10500	+100	45	166100	+800
16	12100	+200	46	178100	+900
17	13900	+200	47	191100	+1000
18	15900	+200	48	205300	+1200
19	18100	+200	49	220900	+1400
20	20500	+200	50	238100	+1600
21	23100	+200	51	257100	+1800
22	25900	+200	52	278100	+2000
23	28900	+200	53	302100	+3000
24	32100	+200	54	330100	+4000
25	35500	+200	55	364100	+6000
26	39100	+200	56	406100	+8000
27	42900	+200	57	462100	+14000
28	46900	+200	58	542100	+24000
29	51100	+200	59	662100	+40000
30	55500	+200	60	862100	+80000

Maximizing XP

By reaching the full level of 60, Shepard will get up to a total of 100 points to spend on talents while your squad mates will only get up to 80. Disperse your points accordingly as you feel is best. **You won't be able to re-allocate them once they are set**. When Shepard is granted Spectre status, a single bonus skill point is put into Charm or Intimidate.

To get the most experience that you can, it’s advised that you never kill enemies in the Mako, as only about 40-50% of the experience that you would normally gain is earned from Mako kills. It’s also wise to always have a squad mate with a high Decryption skill so you can open any container and get any loot and experience.

However, it should be known that even with the most astute XP gaining, it will be next to impossible to reach level 60 in one playthrough. But, with proper action, it is possible to reach levels in the mid 50's.

by Dtailz

9. Combat 101

Did I fire five shots, or six? No wait, it was seven.

The Milky Way can be a very dangerous place. For the commander and his squad to survive, they'll need to know their way around the battlefield. This section will show you the very basics of combat so you won't venture out into the unknown and get instantly killed by something you didn't notice.

HUD

The lower left corner of your screen displays the health and shield levels of you and your squad mates, represented by the red and cyan bars respectively. Above those, you'll find Shepard's currently equipped weapon along with its overheat meter which will fill as shots are fired and fade back as you lay off the trigger.

Directly to the right, you'll see two images; the one on top representing your medi-gel count (they restore you and your squad's health) and the one on the bottom representing your grenade count. In the top center you'll see the health and shields of any enemy that Shepard is targeting. The lower right corner of the screen has a radar that displays Shepard's squad, points of interest, enemy positions and anything of importance for the mission.

Power Wheel

The power wheel is a menu that pauses time and allows Shepard to select powers of his/her own or those of his/her squad mates to activate. Only one power can be used at a time, but you can synchronize powers from each squadmate. Squadmate powers have the same potential power as Shepard's, depending on how they are leveled. Each power has it's own individual cooldown time, represented by that power being grayed out and unselectable while it recharges. Other powers can still be used. One of Shepard's powers can be mapped to the power wheel button, meaning it will be used with just a quick tap.

Squad Commands

In combat, you'll need to know how to move around the battlefield to survive. Shepard and his/her squad can take cover behind walls, rocks, building, et cetera. Each squadmate can be individually called to take cover at or move to a particular position. They can also be ordered to attack a specific target that you have selected, and be ordered to rally to your position if they have been put into cover beforehand.

Note that you can change the behavior of your squad in the options menu. Squadmates can be set to use their available powers actively without your consent, to only use defensive powers (like barrier, for example), or to only use powers when you order them to. Choose whichever you feel is the best for your playing style. If you set them to actively use their powers, you can still order them to use them in combat, but be wary of them using powers ineffectively or at times you don't want them to.

Grenades

Grenades are fired in a spinning disc throw. However, they do *not* move in an arc, they will always fly perfectly straight to the point you were looking at at the time you threw it. Grenades are detonated by pushing the same button used to throw them. They will stick to walls, floors, ceilings, but not enemies. Grenades can be detonated at any time, either while still in the air or after landing and coming to rest. Only one grenade can be active at a time. Look for grenade upgrades which can add abilities such as fire, freezing, or radiation attacks. *You and your squad will not take damage from your own grenades, so use them indiscriminately.*

Accuracy and Movement

Firing your guns from cover is always more accurate than while you're standing in the open. You also have the ability to crouch to make your weapons more accurate as well as make you a smaller target. Shepard has the ability to sprint short distances while in combat. Be mindful of the Fatigue Meter, which only appears when Shepard is sprinting, or when the meter is recharging. If Shepard fully expends the meter, you will have to wait until the bar refills completely until you can sprint again.

Armor

Armor comes in 3 different forms. Light, medium and heavy. Light armor offers the most speed while giving relatively little protection. Heavy armor is the strongest of all three but it has a downside of preventing Shepard from moving quickly. Medium armor is a balance between light and heavy. It offers a moderate level of protection while allowing Shepard to move fairly quick. Armor can be modified to give bonuses such as health regeneration and shield strength. All classes can wear Light Armor by default, Vanguards and Infiltrators can be upgraded to wear Medium Armor, but **only** Soldiers can use Heavy Armor.

Gun Basics

Guns don't actually run out of ammo in Mass Effect. Instead, all weapons use an overheat system. As you fire a weapon, an overheat meter will begin to fill. If the meter fills, a weapon becomes overheated and will have to cool down completely before it can be fired again. Be mindful of this, as the overheat meter empties slower if it is maxed out than if it is allowed to cool down from an earlier point. Each gun can be modified to increase damage, add incendiary damage, etc. Upgrades are found both in stores on the citadel and in the lower deck of the Normandy.

Weapon Powers

- Assault Rifles (Overkill) – High rate of fire, moderate damage. Overkill allows for increased accuracy with assault rifles for a limited time. The weapon will also overheat at a much slower pace, allowing for longer continuous fire. *Only Soldiers can use this power*.
- Shotguns (Carnage) – Low rate of fire, high damage at close range. Carnage fires a projectile at the enemy that will explode when it hits. Carnage has a small area of effect and can knock down and stun enemies.

- Pistols (Marksman) – Moderate rate of fire, moderate damage. Marksman makes pistols more accurate for a limited time. This power functions very similarly to Overkill. It is advisable to upgrade this power only if Overkill is not available in your character's class.
- Sniper Rifles (Assassination) – Very Low rate of fire, very high damage. Assassination reduces idle sway to zero when zoomed in and provides an *extremely* high damage boost to the first shot fired, and only the first shot.

By Dtailz

10. Guns, Guns, Guns

Yeah, But Can I Shoot Them?

[Specific weapon details not covered in Combat 101. How weapons are upgraded, how they best function, and where to find the best ones]

11. Biotic Abilities

I am a Biotic Specialist, like my father before me

In this section, we'll go over biotic powers available to Shepard and your squad and how to best use them. The 3 biotic classes in Mass Effect are the Adept, Vanguard and the Sentinel. Liara, Wrex, and Kaiden all have biotic powers. This section will list both which classes have what abilities, and what they do to your enemies.

Warp

(Adept, Vanguard)

(Liara, Wrex)

Deals damage over time and weakens the armor of your target. This power is very useful on higher difficulties when used on higher level enemies that may activate Immunity (noticeable if their healthbar turns white). The DoT (Damage over time) effect also stops the effects of health regeneration on any enemies that can regenerate their health.

Throw

(Adept, Sentinel, Vanguard)

(Liara, Wrex, Kaidan)

Launches the enemy away from you. Throw can also shove movable boxes into the enemy, causing significant damage that goes through their shields. Throw is also good for low-gravity environments to launch enemies out of bounds, resulting in an insta-kill. Best used to temporarily remove threats or to keep enemies from getting too close.

Lift

(Adept, Sentinel, Vanguard)

(Liara, Kaiden)

Lifts an enemy into the air, making them vulnerable to any additional attacks. Whenever Lift is used, enemies will conserve whatever momentum they had before being lifted. This means that if an enemy is charging you, when lifted they'll go flying into the air at high speeds. In low-gravity areas Lift can easily move enemies out of bounds for an instant kill. When used on a stationary enemy, it's a very good power to be used in conjunction with Throw, as it can either send them into a wall for extra damage or throw them into pitfalls for an instant kill. The opponent will also be thrown much farther than they would normally. Lift is also great against enemies that move around a lot and won't stay still. They'll be immobilized and prone to being shredded by bullets.

Barrier

(Adept, Sentinel, Vanguard)

(Liara, Wrex, Kaidan)

Essentially strengthens the user's shields for a period of time, or until the extra points of protection are stripped from attacks. The barrier acts just as normal shields would (It doesn't protect against melee or environmental hazards). Barriers are best used when your shields are about to fail, so you won't have to worry about using medi-gel. This is a purely defensive power, but can drastically increase you and your squadmate's survivability.

Singularity

(Adept)

(Liara)

Sucks enemies and movable objects into a gravitational field. Enemies will take health damage if they get hit by objects in the field. When enemies are pulled into the singularity field, other area-of-effect abilities can be used to great effect. It is similar to Lift, except enemies will be tossed around the common point of the Singularity instead of continuously lifted up higher and higher. This power is perfect for enemies who have bunched up into a tight group.

Stasis

(Adept, Sentinel)

(Liara, Wrex, Kaidan)

Freezes opponents in a mass effect field for a limited time, rendering them immune to damage but also making them unable to attack. Stasis is best used in situations where a

particular powerful enemy is getting too close to your squad. Use it on enemies and fall back so you can take their health down some more. Rinse and repeat.

Notes

Biotic powers can easily become a great way to absolutely dominate enemies. And, your squadmates' powers are no less effective when compared to Shepard's. This means that, if you want biotic abilities but also like having lots of guns, one effective strategy is to be the class of your choosing (Soldier, perhaps), and simply use someone like Liara for her biotic powers.

by Dtailz

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12. Tech Abilities

You know, I once dabbled in tech abilities. Not in 'Nam, of course.

[What tech powers do, which classes have them, and how they are best used.]

13. Building Your Squad

Can I get one in pink? Yes. Yes, you can.

Welcome to Squad Building! Here is where you'll learn some tips and tricks for building the perfect squad. You'll learn who is best at what, and who to take with you on your adventures.

Make sure you have a good balance on your squad. The general rule of thumb is one person for biotics, one for guns/soldier-y stuff, and one for tech. This is absolutely critical in the first game because of Decryption and Electronics. Both of these skills are only available to people who use tech (Infiltrators, Sentinels, and Engineers). These will both unlock doors, safes, and generally just be a very handy ability to have around. Furthermore, Electronics gives a skill called Overload which, alongside Warp, removes shield from enemies. These skills are extremely useful.

Now let's meet the people you'll be working with:

Kaidan Alenko

Kaidan is a great choice for pretty much any team. As a **Sentinel**, Kaidan is one of the most flexible people you can have. Kaidan's great as both a Biotics specialist and a Tech specialist. An excellent candidate for a specialist on both Decryption and Electronics. His defensive skills grant him excellent survivability, at the cost of direct combat output. Teams up well with Ashley. Kaidan meshes well with players who have a character in any of the "hybrid" classes, especially Vanguards or Infiltrators.

Tali'Zorah nar Rayya

Tali is the master of technology. As the **Engineer** squadmate, Tali is one of the best choices for Decryption and Electronics. Tali will also be the squadmate who can have the most shielding, giving a large boost to their survivability. She is trained in shotguns, despite her apparent class dedication to tech abilities. Tali is a great for players who have a Soldier character.

Liara T'Soni

Liara is the master of biotics. Very similar to Tali in terms of specialization. Liara is the **Adept** team member. Great support squadmate with some devastating attacks like Warp and Singularity. Liara is a candidate for Electronics, but I personally wouldn't use her for that. Liara's talents are better used elsewhere and there are better candidates to choose from. Liara can devastate the enemy without firing a shot. However, Liara is not as durable as other squadmates, and is relatively quick to fall in combat. Liara works best with Soldier classes who can keep her alive and able to use her powers.

Garrus Vakarian

As the **Infiltrator** squadmate, Garrus is a sniping master. Garrus can also use Decryption and Electronics. With Sniping fully maxed, Garrus becomes an offensive powerhouse. An incredibly versatile teammate with many great abilities. Garrus can easily be your most popular choice. Garrus can go well with almost any class.

Ashley Williams

As the **Soldier** squadmate, Ashley brings one thing and one thing only to the table: guns. In all seriousness, like the protagonist from Evil Dead who shares the same name, Ashley brings overwhelming force to the table. However, Ashley lacks a lot of support options outside of First Aid. It's really up to you if you want a unit that dishes out pain like no other but lacks support. Ashley has no tech or biotic abilities, making her somewhat lacking as a support teammate. This makes her and Kaidan function well as a duo. Ashley is great with Sentinel players.

Urdnot Wrex

As the name would imply, Wrex is a dinosaur. As the **Vanguard** of the team, Wrex is somewhere between Liara and Ashley. Like Liara, Wrex uses Biotics as the main form of damage, but like Ashley, Wrex is incredibly tough to kill. However, you put Wrex in a room with five baddies and more than likely Wrex will walk out alone. An absolutely devastatingly offensive teammate. Teams up very nicely with Garrus.

Notes

Unless you are actively seeking to unlock those precious squadmate achievements, it's best to have at least one combat, one tech, and one biotic team member. This gives you versatility in available actions during combat, as well as makes the game more fun. But, in all likeliness, you'll take Garrus everywhere. No one would judge you.

by Sreyb

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14. Weapon & Armor Mods

Because sometimes bullets are just better when they are on Fire/Frozen/Irradiated/Electric/Biotic-y

So, you've finally found that perfect rifle and you've managed to scrounge up fashionable pink armor for all of your squadmates, but you've been wondering: what the hell do you do with all those weapon and armor upgrades that have been clogging up your inventory? First off, pull up your 'Equipment' menu. In your 'Equipped Item' slot at the top left, you'll see one or more blank squares. Those are your Upgrade Slots. Upgrades add all kinds of interesting and helpful effects to your equipped items. First, Armor Upgrades.

Armor Upgrades

Stimulant Pack I, II, III

Stimulant Packs are Cooldown Reduction upgrades, meaning they will reduce your power cooldown times. This seems useful, but they are largely redundant. Other upgrades at higher levels will have this same effect at a higher reduction percentage and have additional effects.

Armor Plating I, II, III -- **Ablative Coating** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Energized Plating** VII, IX, X

These will reduce the amount of bullet damage you take from each hit.

Hardened Weave I, II, III

Hardened Weave offers an upgrade called Hardening. This upgrade will reduce damage from biotic or tech attacks (powers such as Lift or Sabotage). Like the Stimulant Pack, Hardened Weave is redundant.

Toxic Seals I, II, III

Toxic Seals offer protection from toxic gases and radiation found on some planets. They are, like Stimulant Pack and Hardened Weave, made redundant by higher level upgrades.

First Aid Interface I, II, III -- **Medical Interface** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Medical Exoskeleton** VII, IX, X

All of these will allow your health to regenerate at X points per second. Medical Interface also offers Toxin Resistance. Medical Exoskeleton offers both of those and reduces your power cooldown times. Soldier classes may find these upgrades redundant thanks to their automatic health regeneration ability, but the upgrade will make a soldier's health regenerate even faster. All other classes will benefit from the health regeneration ability that they are otherwise locked out of.

Shield Battery I, II, III -- **Shield Modulator** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Shield Interface** VIII, IX, X

These upgrades will add points to your shields, allowing them to take more damage before failing. Other upgrades will add points to your shields, but only this upgrade goes as high as +160 points.

Shield Regenerator I, II, III -- **Energized Weave** IV, V, VI, VII

These increase the rate at which your shields recharge. Energized Weave also offers the Hardening upgrade.

Shock Absorbers I, II, III

Shock Absorbers increase your Physics Threshold, meaning that it will increase protection from explosives and high impact ammo and increase damage output for the biotic abilities Lift and Throw. Just like Stimulant Pack, it's made redundant by higher level upgrades. If you do not have those higher level upgrades yet, you may want to consider keeping it for the biotic bonus until you do.

Kinetic Buffer IV, V, VI, VII -- **Kinetic Exoskeleton** VIII, IX, X

Kinetic Buffer and Kinetic Exoskeleton both increase your Mobile Accuracy, meaning that you can aim better while moving, and increase your shields. Kinetic Buffer will reduce your power cooldown times and Kinetic Exoskeleton will reduce your shield recovery time.

Motorized Joints I, II, III -- **Exoskeleton** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Combat Exoskeleton** VIII, IX, X

Motorized Joints and its higher level versions all increase your Smash Damage or melee damage. Exoskeleton and Combat Exoskeleton will also increase your Physics Threshold. Combat Exoskeleton will increase Hardening.

Weapon Upgrades

Now on to Weapon and Ammo Upgrades. Choose the weapon you want to upgrade and pull up your Upgrade Inventory screen. Your first upgrade slot will always be the Weapon Upgrade slot. There are 5 types.

Combat Sensor I, II, III -- **Combat Scanner** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Combat Optics** VIII, IX, X

The geth can and will jam the enemy radar at the bottom right of your screen. This upgrade stops that from happening. If you don't want to take up one of Shepard's upgrade slots, you can always equip it to one of your squadmates' weapons. Note that it only works if you or your squadmate are using the weapon it is equipped to. Combat Optics also increases your Max Accuracy (meaning a smaller aiming circle).

Improved Sighting I, II, III

Increases your Max Accuracy. This upgrade may be helpful in the beginning, but it will be useless by the time you've leveled up your weapons skills and acquired better guns.

Heat Sink I, II, III -- **Frictionless Materials** VIII, IX, X

Heat Sink offers Heat Absorption, which allows your weapon to cooldown faster. Frictionless Materials offers Heat Damping, which reduces the amount of heat your weapon builds up. Both of these are highly recommended for shotguns and sniper rifles. A sniper rifle with two high level upgrades will be done cooling down before you finish reloading. Frictionless Materials also offers a damage bonus. If you plan on using High Explosive Rounds (see Ammo Upgrades) on your pistol or assault rifle, you better equip these.

High Caliber Barrel I, II, III -- **Rail Extension** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Scram Rail** VIII, IX, X

Or you could go in the complete opposite direction. These upgrades sacrifice Heat Absorption for Damage. High Caliber Barrel also has a Rate of Fire penalty, meaning your gun will shoot slower. If you're using High Explosive Rounds (see Ammo Upgrades) on your sniper rifle or shotgun, equip these.

Recoil Damper I, II, III -- **Kinetic Stabilizer** IV, V, VI, VII -- **Kinetic Coil** VIII, IX, X

With these, the recoil on your gun won't affect your aim as much. They are great for assault rifles and sniper rifles. Equip an assault rifle with Kinetic Coil and Frictionless Materials and you pretty much won't have to let up on the trigger. A sniper rifle with one of these won't sway nearly as much. Kinetic Coil also has a Damage Bonus.

Note: *Higher level weapons have a second Weapon Upgrade slot. Feel free to mix and match or double up on any of the upgrades. The last upgrade slot on your weapon will always be the Ammo Upgrade slot. There are 9 types of ammo.*

Ammo Upgrades

Anti-Personnel Rounds I, II, III -- **Shredder Rounds** IV, V, VI, VII

These ammo types do extra damage against organics. Use them against husks, rachni, and Thorian Creepers.

Armor Piercing Rounds I, II, III -- **Tungsten Rounds** IV, V, VI, VII

They do a damage bonus to synthetics, so you'll want to use these against the geth.

Incendiary Rounds IV, V, VI, VII -- **Inferno Rounds** VIII, IX, X

You'll do extra points of damage for 5 seconds and incur an Accuracy Penalty against your target with these equipped. They also prevent krogan from regenerating their health.

Cryo Rounds IV, V, VI, VII -- **Snowblind Rounds** VIII, IX, X

A percentage of cryo-modded bullet damage will bypass shields entirely and deal direct hits to HP. Your enemies will also suffer an Accuracy Penalty. Snowblind Rounds deal a Damage Bonus and inflict an enemy Accuracy Penalty, but your gun won't fire as quickly. Double up Scram Rails with Snowblinds on shotguns for awesome damage.

Chemical Rounds I, II, III -- **Polonium Rounds** IV, V, VI, VII

These ammo mods allow you to poison your enemies. They'll do X damage per second for 5 seconds. They also have a neat Toxic Damage stat that is useful against those that can regenerate their health. The bonus doesn't deal direct damage to your target. A shot that deals 100 points of damage deals an extra 30 points at +30% Toxic Damage that the enemy must heal first before he can finally start regaining health. The regeneration delay can make a difference in tough battles.

Hammerhead Rounds I, II, III -- Sledgehammer Rounds VIII, IX, X

These mods increase Weapons Force, meaning you can now knock your enemies over with a well-placed shot. They are great for shotguns. Sledgehammer Rounds also do Toxic Damage, but suffer a Heat Absorption Penalty. Combine them with Heat Sink or Frictionless Materials to null this.

Phasic Rounds I, II, III

A percentage of every Phasic Round fired bypasses your target's shields and deals direct damage, however; you'll do 30% less damage than a normal bullet would. I wouldn't bother with these. Cryo Rounds do the same thing without the damage penalty.

Radioactive Rounds I, II, III

This mod has a Target Cooldown Penalty. This means that enemies with biotic or tech abilities won't be able to recharge their powers as quickly and use them as often. It can be useful when fighting asari.

High Explosive Rounds VIII, IX, X

A lot of these ammo mods revolve around knowing what to use against which target. Once you get these, you can forget all of that. They have a 400 to 420 cm blast radius, do bonus damage, and add weapons force. Their only downside is +500% heat generation, meaning just about every gun overheats in one shot. You can use Frictionless Materials on your pistols or assault rifles to get a few more shots off before overheat, but this mod really shines when you put it on shotguns and sniper rifles. Combine them with Rail Extensions or Scram Rails for maximum damage.

by R4VEM45T3R

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15. DLC: Empty Pockets

Mass Effect is not too deep in the realm of downloadable content, so don't expect much. However, what content there is is not without merit, and deserves to be disseminated to you.

Bring Down The Sky

This pack adds an asteroid to explore both on foot and in the Mako, and provides its own story arc. It is completable in only 1-2 hours, depending on your proclivity for side missions.

While it does provide the player with a very high-quality weapon or item of their choosing, it does *not* provide any new weapons or armors unique to this DLC.

Pinnacle Station

Pinnacle station is a very simple pack, and essentially gives you the chance to compete in various time trial missions. There is no story to this pack, and it does not add any new or unique content.

by /u/JerziDevil

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16. Miscellaneous Tips

Because... Reasons!

- Talk to everyone you possibly can, especially on your first playthrough. You never know what you'll uncover, unlock, or discover.
- Don't forget to upgrade your squadmates' armor and weapons. They won't do it themselves.
- If you make a second character, you can choose a bonus talent from any talent you've unlocked the achievement/trophy for. Pick something that compliments your character class' weaknesses.
- If you are trying to unlock squadmate achievements, recruit them as soon as possible, and hold off on completing side quests aboard the Citadel until they are in your party. Take them with you *everywhere*.
- You can't save Jenkins no matter what you do. Don't feel bad.
- It's practically impossible to reach level 60 on the first playthrough. Don't even try. You're still gonna try, aren't you?
- Credits max out at 9999999, and omni-gel maxes at 999. Any credits or gel gained afterward won't add to this amount. But at that point, you'll probably not have to worry about that.

by JerziDevil

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17. Finished with Mass Effect

I Am NOT Addicted. I Can Stop at Any Time. I Just Don't Want To.

Well, you did it. Certainly if you're reading this section. Just like finishing a good book, you probably wonder, "where to now?" All these characters that you interfaced with are just cut off, right like that. Harsh.

But it's not the end, not really. You have two options: you can play again or go straight into ME2. Let's talk about the first, first.

All Mass Effect games offer a sort of “New Game+” allowing you to restart from your ending level with more credits and resources. This means combat will be harder, higher-level weapons and upgrades will be available, and you’ll have enough money to compensate. You'll have all the stuff you had at the end of your first go around, so don't worry about losing that precious, precious sniper rifle that you love oh so dearly. Maybe next time you'll fall in love with someone else? Maybe you'll not be such a Paragon little boy scout and crack some heads this time around.

Save Import Worries

With Mass Effect 2 it’s possible to import a character from Mass Effect 1, retaining all of their important choices and their Paragon/Renegade alignment. You'll retain all your characters main accomplishments, as well as enjoy some rewards if you happen to transfer a character at the max level of 60. Oh, and remember: Each individual playthrough is a separate file, so you can play through the game with the same character multiple times and import each one separately into Mass Effect 2 or 3.

SPOILERS FOLLOW. DO NOT READ FURTHER IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED ME1.

Some decisions in Mass Effect are minor, some apply slightly in following games, and some are downright world-changing. The most important choices lie within characters: it’s possible to never get certain squadmates or have them killed—this applies to Garrus and Wrex, both of whom are found on the Citadel. It’s best to get them early in the game, because after a certain point the Citadel will no longer be open to you.

If you are happy with how things turned out, then perhaps it's time to move on to Mass Effect 2. Be ready for some shockers. There'll be a lotta ups, a lotta downs, and some creamy middles. So strap on that N7 armor, because you aren't even close to finished.

Mass Effect 2 Beginner's Guide

So, you've presumably stopped whoever the main villain of the first game is, and also may have made some surprising and alarming realizations about whoever it was you were fighting. But now the journey must continue, and you want to know what to do. Well, fear not! We will get your through this, kicking and screaming the whole way, we **will** get you through this.

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1. Transferring Your Save File

Hey, I know that guy/girl!

ME2 is bundled with a little tool that lets you port over your character from a completed ME1 game. Your character's choices will be referenced in ME2, so it's important to be sure you did everything the way you want before transferring. The save file on PC is usually found in My_Documents/BioWare/Mass_Effect/Save. You will not be able to change any part of your previous decisions, but you will be able to change classes. For more, see below.

Only Paragon/Renegade scores, previous choices, and a small amount of minerals/credits will transfer, and even Paragon/Renegade gets reduced. Just as in the last game, you're free to choose your own path. Despite the free-form nature of it, this guide fully recommends importing a previous save, the better to help immersion. If you do *not* import a save file, the game will allow you to make some decisions from the first game. However, some variables affected along the story will be chosen for you, so if you want to see a specific outcome or have more leeway in what happens in your adventure, importing a save is the best option.

by Hypersigils

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2. Class Warfare

Seriously, dat Class.

Mass Effect 2 has the same basic classes as Mass Effect. However, these classes' powers have been redistributed and altered significantly, so it's easier to think of this as a separate class system, even though there are deep parallels.

Every class has a signature power, unique to that class. These signature powers help define the classes and distinguish them from each other. All classes can use heavy weapons and handguns, but other weapons are available only to certain classes.

Soldier

The **Soldier** is the pure combat class. The soldier excels at dealing damage, and is the only class which can wield every type of weapon, as well as the only class which can wield the assault rifle. The soldier's signature ability, Adrenaline Rush, slows down time and makes aiming significantly easier, both with sniper rifles and with high-recoil assault rifles. The

soldier also benefits from all three types of ammo, allowing greater versatility in stripping enemy defenses. Combined with concussive shot, this allows the soldier to strip all three types of defenses, a property it shares with only one other class.

However, the soldier is often viewed as the "basic class", and they certainly have less interesting powers than any of the other classes. Soldiers work well with power-based squadmates, since most powers only work on defenseless enemies. Soldiers are great for both beginners to the game, or for anyone who just wants to shoot things.

Adept

The **Adept** is the pure biotic (think magic) class. The adept is particularly good at crowd-control and temporary incapacitation. The adept's signature power, singularity, plays to both of these strengths. Adepts are also one of only two classes to have the warp ability, which strips armor and biotic barriers, and additionally detonates biotic combos. However, the adept pays for this with a reduced weapon set; adepts may only equip handguns and heavy weapons. Adepts are also weak against shields, since none of their abilities are particularly effective on them.

When playing as the adept, it's best to include a squadmate with overload, to balance the adept's inability to strip shields.

Engineer

The **Engineer** is the pure tech class. The engineer is the least directly confrontational of the classes, preferring a support and control role to direct combat. This is exemplified by the engineer's signature ability, Combat Drone, which summons a holographic drone to fight on behalf of the squad. The engineer is also one of only two classes to have the overload ability, which strips shields and damages synthetic enemies. The engineer can also strip armor, though a squadmate with warp is still necessary to strip barriers.

Like the adept, the engineer can only wield handguns and heavy weapons; the engineer's direct damage output is thus rather limited, and they will rely on squadmates more than most classes.

Vanguard

The **Vanguard** is the biotic/combat hybrid class. They focus on a fast and relentless style of combat uncommon with other classes. The vanguard's signature power, Biotic Charge, reflects this. It propels the vanguard across the battlefield, staggering enemies and bringing the vanguard's shotgun into play. At higher levels, charge will also restore shields. Because of the frequent charging, vanguards are significantly less reliant on cover than the other classes.

However, it is not appropriate for every circumstance, and in larger fights, the vanguard may find none of their powers or weapons applicable to the situation. Therefore, it's best to bring balanced squadmates to strip defenses and snipe, and to let them do the heavy lifting when necessary.

Infiltrator

The **Infiltrator** is the tech/combat hybrid class. The infiltrator is probably best described as the opposite of the vanguard. An infiltrator carries a sniper rifle in place of the vanguard's shotgun, and receive a short time dilation effect when entering the rifle's scope. Their focus on eliminating enemies safely and from a distance is well served by their signature ability, Tactical Cloak, which makes them briefly invisible as well as provides a major damage boost to the first shot fired while cloaked. The infiltrator's combination of powers are also more balanced than the vanguard's, allowing them to strip a wider variety of defenses, though they cannot strip barriers.

However, at close range, an infiltrator is of limited use, and smaller environments are too tight for tactical cloak to offer much help; in these circumstances, squadmates with shotguns will be useful.

Sentinel

The **Sentinel** is the biotic/tech hybrid class. The sentinel is primarily concerned with defenses, both its own and those of its enemies. The sentinel's signature power, Tech Armor, allows the sentinel to absorb significant amounts of damage, while its other powers are focused on stripping enemy defenses. The tech armor can also be detonated, granting the sentinel greater freedom of movement and less reliance on cover, as they can re-activate tech armor and instantly recharge their shields the instant they go down (provided no power is cooling down).

Sentinels therefore make surprisingly good tanks, and are best combined with high-damage squadmates, since they can only use handguns and heavy weapons. The sentinel has both warp and overload, which lets it strip all three kinds of defenses.

Notes

Many people ask which class to use for their first time. While your choice of classes in Mass Effect should inform that decision, it should not be the only thing you consider. You should ask yourself what kind of gameplay you're interested in:

- The Soldier is focused on traditional cover-based shooting.
- The Adept is focused on area-of-effect skills and incapacitating enemies.
- The Engineer is focused on controlling the battlefield and indirect damage.
- The Vanguard is focused on running and shotgunning.
- The Infiltrator is focused on misdirection and sniping.
- The Sentinel is focused on defense and powers.

Remember that none of these classes can carry itself without the aid of squadmates. Mass Effect 2 has the largest and most varied squad of the trilogy. No matter what kind of gameplay you favor, you will have squadmates who can handle the other areas you won't be so proficient in.

By NYKevin

3. The Dialogue Wheel: Updates

I Should Go.

Details

The conversation wheel makes another appearance in ME2--surely a good friend to veteran players. The wheel works the same as it did in the first game

, so high Paragon and Renegade scores are just as important to unlock those special dialogues. For this reason it's recommended to use an imported character; if you end up encountering Charm and Intimidate options early on, the carried-over points from your previous game should give you enough to manage.

Be aware of one change, however: There is no Charm/Intimidate score in ME2. Instead, Paragon/Renegade choices unlock based upon *the percentage of times you chose a Paragon/Renegade option earlier in ME2*. In other words, the more Paragon choices you've taken so far, the more will be unlocked for you later, and the same is true for Renegade. This means it will be more difficult to "unlock" some Paragon/Renegade options unless you stick fairly consistently to one or the other.

There's something new related to your Paragon/Renegade score, however: in certain situationss your screen may flash with a blue or red icon, indicating you can interrupt the current events in any number of ways. These are not keyed to your Paragon or Renegade level, but do tend to follow the same type of action as the appropriate dialogue option would take in terms of speech. A Paragon interrupt, for example, might involve comforting a friend or keeping a colleague from babbling. A Renegade interrupt might consist of firing your gun to attract attention or punching someone. Do note: as always, it's not possible to call Paragon actions "good" or Renegade "bad." Shepard will never take a blindly evil action, but sometimes he or she might tread a fine line.

Interrupts

Interrupts, naturally, interrupt the current speaker. They last for a few scant seconds and give a different set of events directly afterwards. As with conversation options in the previous game (and indeed this one), you may find yourself curious what another option (such as neglecting to choose an interrupt, and letting someone keep talking) would bring. For this reason it's good to save and reload to test different options frequently, unless you don't care or plan to replay the game. Alternatively, youtube walkthroughs may help.

In ME1 you may have noticed conversation options ended with characters, and they warded off further conversation with a few stock phrases. ME2 is especially (in)famous for this; squadmates on your ship are notoriously tight-lipped at times and gush at others. To ensure you get every last bit of conversation out of your squadmates, we recommend talking to each squadmate in your ship after every major mission or DLC mission. If, on the other hand, you only want cursory contact, you will be notified when a squadmate wants your attention.

by Hypersigils

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4. Romantic Interests

Thanks For Stopping By.

Unfortunately for those expecting a heartfelt reunion, your hopes were in vain. Time has passed, things have changed, and bonds are fragile. There will be tears, but they won't all be good. Kaidan and Ashley have minimal interaction, and Liara (except in the Lair of the Shadow Broker DLC) keeps her distance. It's possible to stay faithful to your old flame, or move on. You can come back in the third game if that flame still burns.

For male Shepards, Miranda Lawson and Jack are new possibilities for love. Girl Next Door Tali'Zorah is an option as well. For female Shepards, Jacob Taylor and Thane become available. High school sweetheart Garrus is also an option. For either gender, Kelly Chambers and Samara/Morinth are options.

Be warned: most of these characters save Tali and Garrus face the same fate of reduced involvement in ME3. This doesn't mean they're worse options; rather, that your time with them will be a bit more bittersweet.

by Hypersigils

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5. Strip Mining 101

And why you need to pillage unspoiled worlds to save the galaxy.

The Normandy SR-2 has some new and improved features with regards to minerals in the galaxy. No longer will you have to trek to deposits on foot and in Mako; instead, planet scanning and probes take their place.

Most planets can be scanned from the Galaxy Map. Planets have naturally-occurring deposits of Element Zero, Iridium, Platinum, and Palladium, and are listed as Rich, Good, Moderate, Poor, and Depleted in terms of their resource amounts. The elements are used to upgrade Biotics/engineering, assault rifles/SMGs/heavy weapons, cybernetics/defenses/pistols, and shotguns/snipers/medical, respectively. Each upgrade costs a certain amount of a resource, and can be purchased on the SR-2, near Mordin Solus' lab.

When scanning a planet a display

will indicate the density of an element at that location. Sending out a probe will collect those minerals and clear out the deposit. Deposits do not regenerate, and removing all deposits from a planet leaves it "Depleted." The legality of this is questionable, but then you **are** a Spectre. Sort of.

To maximize gains and minimize frustration, this guide recommends the following procedure for collecting elements: when in a new star system, quickly scan all planets of that system (scanning sometimes reveals secret missions). Those that have Good or Rich deposits should be swept: wait until you find a deposit, center in on the place that has the highest concentration, and fire a probe (if two elements are in evidence, try separating the deposits).

Continue until you've mined out the planet. Doing half of a solar system before a mission and half after should keep it from getting monotonous, and with this method you'll have more than enough minerals to buy every upgrade as it becomes evident. Don't bother using probes on anything less than, say, four bars of concentration, otherwise you'll run out. Probes can be bought at Fuel Stations, which are usually located near Mass Relays.

Additional ways to find elements exist. On missions, small containers sometimes contain deposits of the refined mineral. If there's one mineral you just have to find, completing the Shadow Broker DLC should help you a great deal.

by Hypersigils

6. Normandy SR-2

I wish it was called The Millennium Falcon.

Cerberus has been good enough to give you a new, shiny ship. True to its name, it's much like your previous SR-1. There have been, however, some improvements.

The nose of the ship is the same as you remember. Same cockpit, aisle, and galaxy map. However, a new Yeoman and a personal computer complement your station. Messages will come in after almost every mission, so be sure to check your mail often. Behind the galaxy map is the elevator, which will take you up and down levels of the SR-2. Facing the elevator, a corridor to the right will take you to the weapons station. A corridor to the left will take you to the upgrades station and a lab. In the corridor connecting the two is a door leading to the round table and a sort of communications hub, like where you interfaced with the Council and talked amongst the crew in the previous game.

Down a level lies a similar area to the mess hall etc of the SR-1. Four (DLC included) doors are available here: from left to right, starboard observation deck, crew's quarters, life support and port observation deck. Male and female bathrooms are also on this level. Behind the elevator is your Lieutenant's quarters, to the left, and the Medbay to the right. Further through the Medbay lies the AI core. Between the two are sleeping pods and through a door, the main battery.

On the bottom level lies port cargo, to the left, and starboard cargo, to the right. Behind the elevator are stairs leading underneath the walkways. Beyond that are maintenance and the drive core.

The first completely new level from the SR-1 is the Captain's Quarters, complete with wardrobe (change your appearance), medal of honor (view achievements), and more. One special part of this room is the wall-length fish tank. Fish can be bought at many stores through the galaxy, and are either a source of comfort of sorrow--be sure to feed them between every mission, or get your Yeoman to feed them.

by Hypersigils

7. The New Inventory System

What happened to all my stuff?

The inventory system of the first Mass Effect game is completely gone. Instead, armor and weapons now follow two different systems.

Armor

Only Shepard can swap out his/her armor; all your squadmates will stay in their default armor set, although you can unlock a cosmetic variation by completing their loyalty mission. You can change your own armor, as well as customize its color, from the armor locker in your cabin on the Normandy.

Armor is mainly purchased from merchants, and fits into one of five slots: head, chest, shoulders, arms, and legs. Each piece gives a bonus to something, such as health, power damage, or shield recharge time. You can wear one piece in each slot, and mix and match them as you want. Don't buy every armor piece that you see - think carefully about how you want to play the game and what you plan to use.

In addition, upgrades to your armor or your team's armor are available through the research terminal, or purchased from certain merchants. These are not swapped out; you can get as many as you can afford and use all their benefits at once.

Weapons

There are far fewer weapons available to acquire this time around, but with a twist: when you find a weapon, the fabricators on the Normandy SR-2 can make multiple copies to hand out to you and your squadmates. Generally, you'll find these weapons out in the field while on missions, although if you somehow miss one you'll still get it once the mission completes. Specific locations for each weapon are available in the weapons section of this guide. Each time you head out on a mission, you'll be prompted to choose the specific weapons that you and your team will be using. Once chosen, you can't swap weapons mid-mission (unless you happen to run across a weapons locker out in the field), so choose carefully.

8. Leveling Up

We can rebuild him/her. We have the technology. He/She will be better, stronger, faster, and will be a higher level.

[How much XP you'll need to level up, and how many skill points you'll get for doing so. Obvious, really]

9. Guns, Guns, Guns II

The guns strike back.

One of the changes in Mass Effect 2 is how the weapon system works. Gone are the weapon levels and palette-swaps. Instead, each individual class can only equip certain weapon types. Obviously, this lends certain classes to either a heavily weapon-focused playstyle (Soldier), or power-focused playstyle (Engineer).

Arguably more important is how players select their arsenal. In contrast to Mass Effect 1, this time players will select which weapons from each category they want to take with them (and their squadmates). This means you'll need to choose wisely, as once the mission begins you will be locked in with whatever guns you decided on.

Heavy Pistols

No Shepard should leave home without the comfort and care a side arm provides. Heavy pistols are effectively a new classification of gun to the ME universe (as opposed to just 'pistols' in ME1), and are equal parts reliable and deadly. *Available to all classes from the beginning of the game.* For the classes that focus more on their powers over their guns, heavy pistols can easily become a workhorse weapon type.

- **M-3 Predator**

Acquisition: Default

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 300

Accuracy: Moderate

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 37.2

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1 vs. Armor: x1.5 vs. Barriers: x1

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 12/60

Description: In a contest of fire rate vs. fire power, meet fire rate's front runner. The Predator is a gun available from the games outset, and its primary focus is getting as many slugs into your enemy in a short amount of time. Sporting a fire rate 2x that of the Carnifex and 4x that of the Phalanx, its best picked if you feel a need for a fast firing weapon, whether it be to murder your enemies that much quicker, or provide adequate cover for your allies. However, its punch is rather limited.

- **M-6 Carnifex**

Acquisition: Recruit the Professor mission (Omega).

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 145 Accuracy:

Moderate Recoil: High

Base Damage: 81.9

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1 vs. Armor: x1.5 vs. Barriers: x1

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 6/18

Description: Between speed and power, the Carnifex comes in as something of a middle ground. Firing with half the speed but double the power of the predator, it speaks to a slightly slower, “pick your shots” play style, but still has the speed to light up your enemies with decent efficiency. The guns biggest drawback is its ammo, firing only 6 shots before needing to be reloaded. Regardless, it’s a fantastic gun for a more well-rounded play style.

- **M-5 Phalanx**

Acquisition: Firepower Pack (DLC)

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 80

Accuracy: High

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 109.8

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1 vs. Armor: x1.5 vs. Barriers: x1

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 6/24

Description: The pure damage gun of the three heavy pistols, the Phalanx boasts power and accuracy over its predecessors with the sacrifice of speed. Great for placing headshots, this is a weapon effective from all ranges. Its slow fire rate can cause problems for some, however, and it also suffers from the Carnifex’s ammo issue (though this is lessened by the higher power and slower fire rate). A fantastic gun, great for methodical characters who love reaping the rewards of accuracy.

Unique to this gun is a laser site in lieu of any crosshairs. This can require some getting used to.

Sub-machine Guns

A secondary side arm available to all classes but the soldier, sub-machine guns provide the firing speed that the Heavy Pistol lack. With all of its options at least moderately effective regardless of what range you’re firing from, the SMG is a reliable choice to fall back on in almost any situation. However, SMG's generally lack pure stopping power, and so are effective mostly as sidearms. The SMG is available to all classes other than the soldier from the outset of the game from the outset of the game. However, soldiers have access to assault rifles and the Revenant machine gun, so they aren't missing out much.

- **M-4 Shuriken**

Acquisition: Default

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic (3 round burst)

RPM: 700 Accuracy: Low

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 20.5

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 24/240

Description: Unlike its siblings, the Shuriken doesn't feature a fully automatic fire rate, but a three round burst (though with some practice you can 'feather' the trigger to emulate full-auto) and as such it must be used differently than the other two. The burst combined with its manageable recoil makes it an effective gun for firing at longer ranges (similar to the Vindicator assault rifle). When feathering for that full-auto emulation, the Shuriken also provides ample burst and sustained damage at close ranges, making it something of an all-arounder style of SMG.

- **M-9 Tempest**

Acquisition: Tali recruitment mission, Haestrom

Fire Mode: Fully automatic

RPM: 925

Accuracy: Moderate

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 14

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 50/450

Description: The Tempest is an SMG that lives up to its name- it sacrifices accuracy and raw power in order to produce an effective storm of bullets. What this equates to is the faster firing rate, and highest sustained damage of any of the SMGs, providing you can find a home for your slugs. Therein lies the challenges of the weapon: its accuracy and in particular, its recoil. It may be easy to find your target initially, but sustained fire results in ridiculous muzzle climb. This issue is less prevalent at close range, but must be taken into consideration when assessing the best tool for the job at larger distances. If you think you can handle the Tempest, and favor weapon speed over power, this is your gun.

- **M-12 Locust**

Acquisition: Kasumi: Stolen Memory (DLC)

Fire Mode: Fully automatic

RPM: 550 Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 25

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 20/240

Description: The locust is the most reliable SMG available to the player. This reliability stems from the accuracy of the weapon (unequivocally the most accurate SMG in the game, bar none), and its virtually non-existent muzzle climb over extended periods of fire, making it exceptional at all ranges. Its multipliers also make it effective against all defensive types, as opposed to prior SMGs which are great against 2 but limited against armor. The detractions facing the Locust are damage oriented; it lacks the raw damage that the Tempest has behind it and the smaller clip capacity means you'll spend less time firing than you may otherwise. Putting that aside, the unparalleled accuracy and well-rounded damage capabilities make this SMG a fantastic choice.

Assault Rifles

These weapons run the gamut from highly-accurate, semi-auto surgical weapons to crazy-fast machine guns. Generally, however, assault rifles will have more averaged fire rates and damage, but make up for it with decent accuracy and damage multipliers. *Only the Soldier class has the ability to use assault rifles from the outset of the game, but other classes can unlock them at a later point in the game.*

- **M-8 Avenger Assault Rifle**

Acquisition: Default

Fire Mode: Full auto

RPM: 850

Accuracy: Moderate

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 10.8

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal Clip size/Spare Capacity: 40/400

Description: Being the game's base assault rifle, the Avenger comes through as middle of the road in most respects. It has a respectable rate of fire, and is fairly accurate at long ranges (though this is lessened by the fact that the recoil is fairly high in comparison to other assault rifles). Its fast fire rate and large clip make it great in drawn out fights as well, though its damage can be lacking when compared to other weapons of this type. Overall, it's always a solid pick for most situations, but not really ever the best. A very jack-of-all-trades, master of none assault rifle (as can be seen from its rounded damage multipliers).

- **M-15 Vindicator Battle Rifle**

Acquisition: Located on a couch in Archangel's base during his recruitment mission.

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic (3 round burst)

RPM: 73 (overall), 900 (per burst)

Accuracy: Very high

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 36.8

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 24/96

Description: If accuracy is what you're after, look no further than the Vindicator. While it's overall damage output may be lower than other assault rifles due to the nature of it being semi-automatic, its accuracy more than makes up for it. Headshots are a breeze from almost any distance and the burst guarantees a kill on most unshielded enemies. With that said, its slow rate of fire makes those aforementioned shields a problem: it can't cut through them the way a fully automatic weapon can. It's also got one of the smaller clip sizes for an assault rifle. Choose this gun when mid and long ranged battles are prominent, or if you prefer accuracy over sheer fire rate.

- **Geth Pulse Rifle**

Acquisition: Found on Haestrom. *Mission must be started on hardcore or insanity for the weapon to be acquirable.*

Fire Mode: Full auto

RPM: 1000 (variable)

Accuracy: Moderate/high

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 10.8

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.35 vs. Armor: x1.15 vs. Barriers: x1.35

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 40/480

Description: A gun exclusive to those players of the harder difficulties, and it's a more than adequate reward. It makes astoundingly quick work of barriers and shields but is less effective against armor. Its fire rate is the overall highest among assault rifless and is variable to your preference, and it has a sizable clip to go along with it. Its accuracy is impressive for a fully automatic rifle, with low recoil to boot. Unfortunately its base damage is the lowest of any weapon in this class, but this is made up for by its incredible rate of fire. Overall it's a very effective choice in most situations, and outclasses the base Avenger in all but armor damage.

- **M-76 Revenant Machine Gun**

Acquisition: Collector Cruiser. *This weapon is exclusive to the soldier class.*

Fire Mode: Full Auto

RPM: 700

Accuracy: Low

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 21.3

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.2 vs. Armor: x1.4 vs. Barriers: x1.2

Thermal clip size/Spare Capacity: 80/480

Description: If the term "spray and pray" had a physical representation, it's the Revenant.

A respectably high rate of fire and a large clip make this a deadly, if a tad inaccurate, weapon. With the appropriate upgrades, the Revenant can be made accurate enough to pick off most enemies at even extended ranges. However, the strength of this weapon lie in its high damage, large thermal clip, and fast fire rate. With these attributes, the Revenant can absolutely chew through all but the absolute toughest enemies with ease like a hot knife through butter. This makes the Revenant a powerful addition to the Soldier's arsenal, as it will take out large crowds of enemies in almost no time at all.

- **Collector Assault Rifle**

Acquisition: Mass Effect 2 Limited Collectors' Edition (Xbox 360 and PC), Recon Operations Pack (PlayStation 3).

Fire Mode: Full Auto

RPM: 500

Accuracy: Moderate/ high

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 17.4

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 28/280

Description: The Collector Assault Rifle is best thought of as a combination of the Vindicator and Avenger. While it does not boast a high fire rate or damage, it makes up for it with its impressive accuracy. This means you'll spend less time spraying shots around an enemy and more time actually hitting them. In skilled hands, the Collector Assault Rifle is an effective weapon. However, its limited thermal clip size means you'll definitely want to make your shots count, but with its ability to stay on target, that won't be difficult.

- **M-96 Mattock**

Acquisition: Firepower pack DLC

Fire Mode: Semi-automatic

RPM: As fast as you can pull the trigger

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low Base Damage: Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.2 vs. Armor: x1.3 vs. Barriers: x1.2

Shots per clip/ Clip size: 40/400

Description: The Mattock bridges the gap between assault and sniper rifles. While it may have a scant 12 shots per thermal clip, its semi-automatic fire and high damage means enemies can be felled with incredible speed. In the hands of even the average shooter, the Mattock can and will take care of even the toughest enemies just as fast as -- if not faster than -- the Revenant. When paired with the Soldier's adrenaline rush ability, the Mattock becomes quite possibly the deadliest non-heavy weapon in the game, bar none.

Shotguns

A staple of any shooter, shotguns are the weapon of choice for any up close and personal encounter. Find yourself with a Krogan in your face just a little too often, or overrun by mechs and your pistol just isn't cutting it? Well grab a shotgun, sit back and watch the good ol' boomstick work its magic. Only the Vanguard and Soldier classes have the ability to use shotguns from the outset of the game, but other classes can unlock them at a later point in the game.

- **M-23 Katana**

Acquisition: Default

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 48

Accuracy: Low

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 27.5 (per individual shot) 220 (total damage)

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 5/10 Description:

Mass Effect 2's default shotgun is a little lackluster when compared to some of the other shotguns available, primarily the Eviscerator (which shares many traits but is superior in most). Its biggest (and arguably only) advantage is it's superior clip size, which may make aggressive players more comfortable as they have almost twice as many shots to work with. Ultimately, though, this is one of the guns that you'll likely only use until you acquire something better.

- **M-27 Scimitar**

Acquisition: Recruit the Justicar mission (Illium)

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 100

Accuracy: Low

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 20.34 (162.7)

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 8/16

Description: With low base damage but unparalleled fire rate, the Schimitar is the shotgun with the highest potential damage-per-second output of any of the shotguns. The difference is that it isn't reliable as a one shot kill weapon. As such, it is a shotgun favored by aggressive players who want to be in a horde of enemies, firing as fast as humanly possible. For more methodical players looking to better utilize cover and quick kills, you'd do better looking elsewhere.

- **M-300 Claymore**

Acquisition: Collector Cruiser. *This weapon is exclusive to the soldier and vanguard classes.*

Fire Mode: Single shot

RPM: Low

Accuracy: Low

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 50.1 (400.8)

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal Clip size/Spare Capacity: 1/10

Description: A shotgun that really exemplifies “high risk, high reward”. Only being able to fire one shot before needing to reload, a player is punished heavily if they can’t make that shot count. The Claymore has the single highest damage for any shotgun (barring a charged plasma shot), so if you can effectively land the blast its likely to disintegrate most things close to you (especially if utilizing the soldier’s Adrenaline Rush). Ultimately, if you can handle the risk to reap the benefits and don’t mind reloading between shots, the Claymore can become devastating in combat.

- **Geth Plasma Shotgun**

Acquisition: Firepower Pack DLC

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 174

Accuracy: Moderate

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 156.50 (250.38) – initial damage 347.77 (556.40) – charged damage

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 5/10

Description: The Plasma shotgun is very unique in its own right. It fires three bulbs of plasma in lieu of the customary pellet spread (2 of the bulbs only deal 30% of the first’s damage). The weapon also has a slight homing ability when aimed down the sights, and the gun can be charged to make a more accurate, and more powerful blast (but this expends 2 shots). The accuracy can be hard to get used to, due to the weapons unique spread. However, a player who can be patient with the Plasma Shotgun and knows to charge it before each shot will be able to drop most enemies incredibly fast.

However, the weapon's limited ammo capacity means it should probably be saved for more powerful enemies.

- **M-22 Eviscerator**

Acquisition: Cerberus Weapons and Armour DLC

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 48

Accuracy: Low

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 36.8 (294.4)

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal Clip size/Spare capacity: 3/12

Description: One of the game's most popular shotguns, the Eviscerator is a force to be reckoned with. One of the more effective shotguns at medium range due to its tighter spread and high damage output, the Eviscerator, like the plasma shotgun, is something of an all-around type of weapon (as evidenced by the damage multipliers). The biggest drawback is the 3 round clip, which can cause problems for more aggressive players who may get caught reloading in the middle of a horde of enemies. But, when it comes to balancing power and speed, the Eviscerator is an excellent weapon for anyone who can wield it.

Sniper Rifles

To the surprise of absolutely no one, sniper rifles fill the role of highly-accurate facepainters able to quickly dispatch foes with a perfectly-timed headshot. However, not all sniper rifles are created equal, so here's what you need to know.

With sniper rifles in ME2, dealing death from a distance never quite felt so good. The weapon type reeks of high damage and generally low rates of fire; a gun type for the player who likes to pick their shots and make them count. *Only the Soldier and Infiltrator classes* have the ability to use sniper rifles from the outset of the game, but other classes can unlock them at a later point in the game.

- **M-92 Mantis**

Acquisition: Default

Fire Mode: Bolt-Action (single shot)

RPM: Low

Accuracy: High

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 263.1 Damage

Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1 vs. Armor: x1.5 vs. Barriers: x1

Thermal Clip size/Spare Capacity: 1/9

Description: Without question, the Mantis is one of the best default weapons in ME2. Able to take down most lower ranked/undefended enemies with a single headshot, its raw power is only offset by its heat generation -- each shot requires a new thermal clip. Used in conjunction with damages boosting abilities like Adrenaline Rush or Tactical Cloak, and the Mantis will be able to take massive chunks out of even the toughest enemies; a weapon to be respected, and feared should you end up on the wrong side of it. If you're a player who looks to make every shot a kill shot, and every kill shot a headshot, you won't do much better than the Mantis.

- **M-97 Viper**

Acquisition: Recruit the Assassin mission (Illium).

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 240

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 81.9

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.15 vs. Armor: x1.35 vs. Barriers: x1.15

Thermal Clip size/Spare Capacity: 12/48

Description: A weapon that could be considered a scoped equivalent to the Mattock assault rifle, the Viper is especially useful in the hands of a user less concerned with accuracy and more concerned with getting as many shots down range as possible. Its semi-automatic style, quicker rate of fire and comparatively large ammo capacity means that a user is less punished for a missed shot. However, to make up for this faster fire rate, the Viper has low damage numbers when compared to the Mantis or the Widow. It also serves as one of the better sniper rifles in the realm of stripping away shield and barriers. Ultimately, it's a fantastic gun to choose if what you're looking for is a long ranged weapon that's powerful in its own right, but equally forgiving on missed shots.

- **M-98 Widow**

Acquisition: Collector Cruiser. *This weapon is exclusive to the soldier and infiltrator classes.*

Fire Mode: Bolt-Action (single shot)

RPM: Low Accuracy:

High Recoil: High

Base Damage: 363.8

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1 vs. Armor: x1.5 vs. Barriers: x1

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 1/13

Description: "If you're a player who looks to make every shot a kill shot, you won't do much better than the Mantis."

Well, meet the better. The Widow is everything the Mantis is and more. With the most damage-per-shot in the game, the Widow packs a punch that overpowers even many of the heavy weapons. This rifle fells any non-elite enemy with a headshot, and those that don't go down won't have much health left to keep them alive. And don't be fooled by the damage multipliers: the sheer power of the weapon negates the need for them. In the hands of a skilled soldier or infiltrator, the Widow reigns supreme.

When you absolutely, positively need to kill an enemy and every enemy directly behind him, accept no substitutes.

- **M-29 Incisor**

Acquisition: ME2 Digital Deluxe Edition, Aegis Pack DLC

Fire Mode: Semi-automatic (3 Round burst)

RPM: 600 (per burst)

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Moderate

Base Damage: 53.6 (per bullet)

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Thermal clip size/Spare capacity: 15/30

Description: If the Viper is the sniper's rendition of the Mattock, the Incisor is the Vindicator. Described in-game as "anti-shield", the Incisor fits the title quite comfortable. Its burst fire and well-rounded damage multipliers leave most forms of defense in the dust. Unfortunately, this potent defense-stripping ability is offset by the overall low damage of the weapon; it has the lowest damage per bullet of any sniper rifle. Its usefulness is weakened further by the relatively low ammo count you can carry -- burst-firing means your ammo is eaten up quickly. In order to remedy this, it is recommended that Incisor users aim for the body of their targets as missed headshots result in wasted ammo, a valuable commodity for this

particular gun. However, if you're struggling with shielded enemies and need an sniper rifle, the Incisor is still a reliable, albeit temperamental choice.

Heavy Weapons

Sometimes, the only way to move forward is to bring out the big guns. Other times, it's just really fun. These are the weapons you'll bring out when you feel the need to over-compensate for something. *All classes can use heavy weapons*.

- **M-100 Grenade Launcher**

Acquisition: Prologue mission

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 100

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 500

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.25 vs. Armor: x1.25 vs. Barriers: x1.25

Ammo allowed: 10

Description: The standard heavy weapon. The M-100 fires a single grenade for excellent flat damage. It has accuracy well enough to ping someone or something from pretty much any distance. While it may not be the most powerful heavy weapon, it's reliability and ammo count gives you multiple uses. Always a solid choice if you don't know what to expect.

- **Collector Particle Beam**

Acquisition: Horizon Mission

Fire Mode: Fully automatic

RPM: 1200 (visually the gun is a continous energy beam)

Accuracy: High

Recoil: None

Base Damage: 20

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Ammo allowed: 500

Description: The CPB is the fastest firing weapon in the game, even though it doesn’t appear to be; it fires at 1200 RPM but appears as a single beam of energy. This makes it a devastating weapon for drawn out encounters, as the continous beam allows damage to stack on an enemy in an exceptionally rapid pace. Couple this with the need to never reload the thing, and you have yourself a handy tool for going the distance. The usefulness is further increased by its pinpoint accuracy; it has no recoil at all. When it comes to versatility, the Collector Particle Beam excels in killing everything from ants to Godzilla with minimal ammo waste.

- **ML-77 Missile Launcher**

Acquisition: Normandy Research Station

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 80

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 350

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.5 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1.5

Ammo allowed: 15

Description: While the ML-77 suffers from damage lower than the M-100, it makes up for it in the field of accuracy. It also holds more ammunition for your blasting needs, but more importantly, it fires homing missiles. So, if damage isn't as important as all but guaranteeing a hit, the missile launcher is a great choice.

- **M-622 Avalanche**

Acquisition: Normandy Research Station

Fire Mode: Semi-Automatic

RPM: 80

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 50

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x8 vs. Armor: x8 vs. Barriers: x8

Ammo allowed: 20

Description: An oft misunderstood weapon, the Avalanche is more effective than many would make it out to. Sure, the base damage is extremely low for a heavy weapon. But considering the Avalanche's tremendous damage multipliers, it's not so weak. Add to this its ability to freeze almost any undefended target (and frozen enemies take bonus damage), its heavy ammo capacity, and its large impact radius, and you have yourself a winner. One point of note, however: its freezing capabilities does not stop health regeneration, so it's less effective against Krogan or Vorcha. This is a weapon for getting out of a tight corner.

- **M-920 Cain**

Acquisition: Normandy Research Station

Fire Mode: Single shot

RPM: Low (1 shot = 4 second charge time)

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 10,000

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1 vs. Armor: x1 vs. Barriers: x1

Ammo allowed: 1

Description: The heaviest of the heavy weapons. With a damage rating higher than any other weapon the game, the Cain is the nuclear bomb of destruction. It has a 4 second charge time, and only holds one shot, period. But if it lands anywhere near your target, kiss them goodbye. Barring the few major bosses that Shepard will face, the Cain will absolutely destroy **everything**. Even on the highest difficulty of insanity, very few enemies can withstand the raw power of the Cain -- and even than, only just so. With its highly limited ammo capacity, the Cain is to be used only when you absolutely need to destroy everything in the room and can't be bothered any other way.

- **M-451 Firestorm**

Acquisition: Zaeed loyalty mission (Zorya)

Fire Mode: Fully automatic

RPM: 800

Accuracy: Low

Recoil: High

Base Damage: 15

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x1.15 vs. Armor: x1.35 vs. Barriers: x1.15

Ammo allowed: 500

Description: Similar in use to the Collector Particle Beam, the Firestorm fires a torrent of flame forward in a constant stream. That's ultimately where the similarities end. While the CPB functions as a single target slayer, the Firestorm is primarily a crowd control weapon. Firing in a short range cone in front of Shepard, making it ideal for dealing with swarming enemies like Husks or Varren. It only works as an effective cover weapon, keeping enemies at bay while your shields or health recharge. In small, tightly-packed areas, the Firestorm is great for anything and anyone.

- **M-940 Blackstorm**

Acquisition: Gamestop preorder DLC (360), N7 Complete Arsenal Bundle (PS3)

Fire Mode: Single shot

RPM: Low

Accuracy: High

Recoil: None

Base Damage: 300

Damage Multipliers: vs. Shields: x3 vs. Armor: x3 vs. Barriers: x3

Ammo allowed: 5

Description: The most unique of the heavy weapons, the Blackstorm produces a singularity field that draws in nearby enemies and explodes. It's a great heavy for crowd control, and can be effectively used to group targets for your squad mates to pick off. A very strategic gun that can be hugely rewarding if used correctly.

- **Arc Projector**

Acquisition: Cerberus Network DLC

Fire Mode: Single shot

RPM: Low (2 second charge time)

Accuracy: High

Recoil: Low

Base Damage: 400

Damage Multipliers: Unknown

Ammo allowed: 10 Description: The Arc projector has a lot going for it. Though it can be difficult to land a hit due to its charge time, if the shot is landed it is very rewarding. Aside from the fact that it does a respectable amount of damage, it carries with it a sort of 'chain lightning' effect: the arc can jump from one enemy to another and damage or disable both. This is great for ripping through light armored organic and synthetic enemies. Couple this with the fact that it carries the properties of the tech ability overload (detonates pyros and mechs and can cause larger canister explosions). All in all, it's a great weapon for use on groups of lightly armored enemies, or when you'll be dealing with a lot of mechanical or synthetic units.

by BelovedDesperado

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10. Biotic Abilities: Updates

For over a thousand generations, The Biotic Specialists were the guardians of blah blah blah.

[What biotic abilities are there? Who has them? How do they work? How can you combine them for massive damage?]

11. Tech Abilities

We're all fine here, now. Thank you. How are you?

AI Hacking

(Engineer, Infiltrator)

(Tali, Legion)

Temporarily controls synthetic enemies, causing them to attack and aggro other enemies around them.

Rank 1: Recharge Time: 6.00 seconds for Shepard and 12.00 seconds for squad mates.

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12. Building Your Squad

I am pure Squadmate. You should be in awe.

Welcome to Squad Building 2.0! Mass Effect 2 is a whole new animal when it comes to building a squad. First of all, combat has become much more dynamic and a little bit more complicated. First things first, with the new shielding system, it's even more important to have a good balance on your team. Secondly, you can now do combos (this is covered more in Combat) so remember to pick squadmates whose powers mesh well together. Thirdly, squadmates each have a unique power that Shepard can learn when he/she earns their loyalty, which will be discussed in a later section.

Miranda Lawson

Miranda is similar to Kaidan from the first Mass Effect, and is one of two "starter" squadmates who will join your team from the game's beginning. As a Sentinel-type, she can use both Overload and Warp. This allows her to remove shields, barriers, and armor. While her biotic skills might not be as powerful as she claims they are, she is a capable leader and a great choice to lead a second command. She uses Submachine Guns and Heavy Pistols so she won't die on you too much. She unlocks Slam as a bonus power.

Jacob Taylor

Jacob is strange in his averageness. He doesn't excel at any one thing, but is passable at pretty much everything. If he had either Warp or Overload, he might have more durability. Like Miranda, Jacob is one of your "starter" squadmates who will be with you from the game's outset. However, you will most likely use him less and less as better characters join your team.

Mordin Solus

Mordin Solus is the very model of a scientist Salarian. With both Incinerate and Cryo Blast, Mordin can do Tech Combos all by himself. His Loyalty Power, Neural Shock, is a great support power that stops organic units in their tracks (and eventually permanently affects their accuracy). However, it's generally believed that Neural Shock is best left on Mordin for support. Mordin has very little shields and health. And since he uses Submachine Guns and Heavy Pistols he doesn't bring too much firepower to the table. His fragility can be an issue in heated firefights, especially on higher difficulties.

Archangel

Archangle is a mercenary-hunting vigilante looking for some action. As one of the few sniper units, Archangel is an excellent teammate. With his Overload, Concussive Shot, and excellent shields, Archangel becomes an absolute monster. He can be one of the best units in the game. The only possible downside is his Loyalty Power, Armor-piercing Ammo, which can be of very situational use. Archangel makes a great leader and an even better party member. He makes a wonderful team with both Miranda and Thane (since they have Warp to balance out his Overload).

Subject Zero (Jack)

Jack is one of the most powerful Biotics in the entire Mass Effect universe. Her powers are absolutely devastating. As an Adept she is crazy strong on the lower difficulties, but her tendency to run into combat with her Shotgun and Heavy Pistols gets her killed on higher levels. However, her biotic abilities grant her tremendous offensive capabilities. She unlocks Warp Ammo as a bonus power.

Grunt

Grunt is a Krogan soldier who can wield shotguns and assault rifles. He is very similar to Wrex in terms of power and durability. However, he is *very* aggressive and has a tendency to charge into the middle of where combat is heaviest and get himself killed. He'll kill a lot of

people, but he may go down a lot, especially on the higher difficulties. If you control him well though, no one is better suited for holding down a position than Grunt. His Incendiary Ammo is great against armor. He unlocks Fortification as a bonus power.

Thane Krios

A deadly Drell assassin, Thane is an odd character. His powers mark him as an Adept, yet he uses Sniper Rifles and Submachine Guns. Despite being odd though, Thane is an absolute monster in combat. On higher difficulties, Thane's sniping skills and Warp come in handy in taking down enemies. Thane is also a moderately fragile character, so don't expect him to simply absorb damage like a tank. He unlocks Shredder Ammo as a bonus power.

Tali'Zorah vas Neema

One of two Engineer-class squadmates, and returning from the first game, we have Tali. She is an expert with technology and hacking. Tali uses Shotguns and Heavy Pistols. While she doesn't have the range of Legion's Sniper Rifle, Tali does have one of the greatest Loyalty Powers in the game: Energy Drain. Energy drain will sap away energy from both Barriers and Shields and restore Shepard's in the process. This power can even give Shepard (or Tali) more than 100% shielding when maxed out and used right. Tali's great shielding lets her avoid the Grunt and Jack problem of dying by running into the middle of combat and getting killed. On everything but the highest difficulties, Tali is great against inorganic enemies.

Samara

Samara is an Adept that you should think twice before messing with. Her powers are nothing to sneeze at. In fact, Jack, Samara, and Morinth all have about the same amount of power with Biotics. With Submachine Guns and Assault Rifles Samara delivers great firepower. Her Loyalty Power, Reave, is fantastic. It's essentially Tali's power, but with health instead of shields. It's great to use against enemies that have Barriers. On lower difficulties, Samara is incredibly powerful.

Morinth

An equal in power to Samara and Jack, Morinth is one powerful Adept. She plays very similarly to Samara with the same weapons and powers. Her Loyalty Power, Dominate, is another great power. Dominate is essentially A.I. Hacking, but with organics instead of tech enemies. It's as great as it sounds. Just like Samara, Morinth is crazy strong on lower difficulties.

Note: You won't be able to have both Morinth and Samara in your squad.

Legion

Legion is the other Engineer-class in this game. The difference between Legion and Tali are their loyalty powers, armament, and acquisition. Depending on the order of missions you take, Legion will most likely join the team very late in the game. However, since he uses Sniper Rifles and Assault Rifles, Legion plays very similar to Garrus (In other words, he's a great addition to the team). His powers are fantastic whenever you know that you won't be fighting a lot of organic enemies. He unlocks Geth Shield Boost as a bonus power.

DLC Characters

These characters are only available through DLC.

Kasumi Goto

A thief, Kasumi is similar to Thane. She plays like an Infiltrator but uses Heavy Pistols and Submachine Guns. She has Overload which is always highly valuable. Her Loyalty Power, Flashbang Grenade, is excellent. It's very similar to Mordin's Neural Shock, just slightly more versatile. If you want a good support skill, Flashbang Grenade is a great choice. Kasumi pairs up well with Thane and with Miranda. Kasumi is an excellent hacker.

Zaeed Massani

Zaeed is the Ashley of this game. He delivers overwhelming power with his Loyalty Power Inferno Grenade and Assault Rifle. However, he does not play well with others. He has absolutely horrible support abilities (Concussive Shot is it really). Still, he is a devastating powerhouse. Just don't expect anything else from him.

Liara T'Soni

Available only during Lair of the Shadow Broker, Liara is still incredibly powerful. With both Warp and Singularity, Liara's powers can clear out entire rooms on lower difficulties. Stasis is an interesting Loyalty Power. Just like the last game, it freezes units in place, but makes them unable to take damage. It's a very situational power, and is best used for retreating or repositioning yourself while the enemy is frozen.

by Sreyb

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13. Gaining Their Loyalty

Surely you can't be loyal? I am loyal, and don't call me Shirley.

Each Squadmate in ME2 starts off initially cordial, but can become unwaveringly loyal over the course of the game. Everyone has a "Loyalty Mission," which touches on something very important to them--such as honoring a lost lover or hunting down a hated enemy. Shepard's actions during the mission will polarize how your squadmate acts towards you for the rest of the game, usually for the best. It is possible to "fail" a Loyalty Mission, but very difficult. In the event you do "fail," you keep the squadmate (unless they perished) but they never forgive you. If you're worried about failing a mission, don't be. Unless you're intentionally doing so it's going to be very hard to accidentally mess up.

Loyalty has many benefits: besides opening up new conversation topics, allowing for romance, granting them a new outfit and helping you out on the last mission (more on this later), a Loyal squadmate gains a new and impressive power.

Most Loyalty missions trigger automatically after having a squadmate for a few missions, but it's worth talking to them frequently to ensure you don't miss anything. If all else fails, Kelly Chambers the yeoman will tell you when a squadmate is thinking about a Loyalty mission.

by Hypersigils

14. Point of No Return

So, you're telling me I can't return after this point?

Remember in the last game, where after a certain point the Citadel was barred for access until the end of the game? Imagine that, but instead of the Citadel it's the whole galaxy. And the flags are hard to see.

That's what it can be like for the unprepared. Thankfully, you have this guide to help you. First, let us say: the least bit of metagaming you involve yourself in (at least for the first playthrough), the better. The game should be natural. However, if this is your second game or you're comfortable "cheating," read on.

There's a story mission where you need to do something about a Reaper. At the completion of this mission a timer begins to tick: at the end of a variable number of missions afterwards, you'll feel its effects. Rather than being able to do missions at your leisure, at this point time will become important. You can complete as many missions as you want before entering the Omega-4 relay, at which point you'll be there until the end of the game. Afterwards, should you survive the suicide mission, there will be time for anything you didn't complete beforehand.

To ensure everything being done before the suicide mission, complete all missions you'd like to have done beforehand, and **then** begin the Reaper mission. Be sure to talk to your new arrival **before activating the galaxy map**.

by Hypersigils

15. Omega-4 Relay: The Suicide Mission

Suicide is never an option. Call somebody.

This is one of the most difficult and most potentially heartwrenching missions in any ME game or indeed any RPG game currently out there. It's not called a suicide mission for nothing; chances are, your party will not survive completely intact--though it is possible. This guide doesn't wish to spoil even a second of this mission, but we will caution you of two things:

First, DO EVERYTHING. Every Loyalty mission, every secondary mission, every collecting job, every upgrade. Not only will the extra equipment and levels help you out, but the Loyalty of your squadmates will prove **invaluable.**

Second, CHOOSE CAREFULLY. Certain times will come where you'll have to delegate tasks to members of your squad. Make sure to consider their profiles, gauge the task, and ensure they're ready.

The rest is up to you. This guide recommends playing through the mission at least once, as you would normally, before looking up any guides or walkthroughs. It may hurt, but it'll be REAL. And that's what Mass Effect is all about.

Good luck.

by Hypersigils

16. DLC: Cerberus Network

Look at all the extra stuff! Look at it!

Purchasable via the Cerberus News Network on the main menu, several additional content packs can be downloaded. These include:

Zaeed - The Price of Revenge

Gives you a new squadmate. His abilities are Soldier-based, giving him inferno grenades and concussive shots. His loyalty mission will be available as soon as he is recruited.

Kasumi - Stolen Memory

Similar to Zaeed, Kasumi is a new squadmate. Her abilities give her a cloak strike and tech-based attacks. Her loyalty mission will also be available as soon as she is recruited.

Overlord

Overlord provides several new missions in a separate story arc. For those who may have missed the Mako from Mass Effect 1, you will have access to a new type of hovercraft. Overlord is a fairly dark story, especially as it picks up towards its conclusion.

Firewalker

Firewalker is perfect if you love the vehicle sections in Overlord. The story arc is fairly straightforward. Many find this DLC to be somewhat repetitive. Doesn't add any major plot elements.

Lair of the Shadow Broker.

Perfect for the fans of Liara who wished she had a larger role in Mass Effect 2. She will *temporarily* join your squad in the duration of the story arc, and can continue a potential romantic encounter if she was wooed in the first game. This DLC also provides you with the chance to re-allocate both your and your squadmates' skill points, as well as providing extra resources for purchasing upgrades.

Arrival

Arrival is best when played as the final piece of Mass Effect 2. Shepard will be forced to fight *alone* for the first time in the series, and this DLC has a fairly heavy emphasis on stealth

-- though you don't necessarily need to be stealthy if you don't want. Recommended you play Arrival *after* the suicide mission.

Notes

If you purchased a copy of Mass Effect 2 brand new and not used, you should either be given a code (if purchased as a physical copy) or a free download (if purchased digitally) to gain access to the Cerberus Network. This gives you access to Zaeed and Firewalker for free.

Any characters encountered during DLC *will* come up again in Mass Effect 3, so do not fear that they will not be.

by Hypersigils

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17. Miscellaneous Tips

- You no longer need a tech squad mate to unlock crates, so don't worry.
- Don't forget to check Uranus for resources.
- If you choose to romance Kelly, keep in mind she is not considered a full romance and will not unlock the Paramour achievement/trophy.
- If you see a weapon to pick up but don't want to have your current weapon in that slot replaced, you can skip over it. You will automatically unlock the weapon at the current mission's conclusion.
- Avoid using glitches to get infinite paragon/renegade points, they can cause potential problems with transferring save files into Mass Effect 3.
- Unlike Mass Effect 1, you can continue to play ME2 after the end mission, so don't fear about being unable to complete unfinished missions. And, every separate save you make after the final mission will be a separate save to transfer into Mass Effect 3.

by JerziDevil

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18. Finished Mass Effect 2

Just One More Hit, I Swear!

Mass Effect 3 Beginner's Guide

Well, look at you, doing all those things all over the galaxy. Remember that time you did that one thing? Boy, was that a sight! Well, it looks like you're needed to do some more stuff before we can all go out for milkshakes, so let's get to it before whoever the antagonist may be does whatever he or she is planning to do to all of us. And nobody wants that.

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1. Transferring Your Save File

I Can Haz Redhead?

Similar in nature to the previous game, the Import Save function returns for a final showing--though this time it's far more intuitive. Just click and go. However, this could lead to problems if the utility can't automatically find it; just like in ME1, it's expecting to find the save file in My_Documents/BioWare/Mass_Effect_2/Save. You may need to shuffle things if ME3 has difficulties.

Like ME1 to ME2, the game will import your Paragon/Renegade score, and allow you to change your facial features and class if you want. Unlike that previous transfer, you will get to keep your character level from ME2 (up to the level cap of 30) and continue leveling up to the ME3 level cap of 60. If you choose to keep the same class, you'll even have your ability points spent similarly to how they were in ME2. If you'd rather respend them in a different way, you can reset your powers in ME2 before transferring your save file, then spend those points in ME3 to fill out your abilities.

Every choice you made in ME2 is static, and much of it will be presented to jog your memory. Even more so than in ME2, importing a save is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. Without an imported save, the game will assume you didn't do certain things in ME2 that you might actually have done. THIS WILL IMPACT YOU ADVERSELY. And in a game where so much hangs on the littlest decisions, that can mean life or death for all beings everywhere. You can change some things about a previous save, however, such as facial structure and class. Paragon/Renegade score, your level in ME2, and additional small pieces will also be transferred. DO NOT IMPORT AN AUTOSAVE; these are notoriously faulty. Instead, try to make a clean save (through the menu) after the end of the game.

Important choices include (SPOILERS FOLLOW): whether you rewrote or killed the Geth heretics, what happened to Maelon's data, whether you destroyed or saved the Collector base, and who survived the suicide mission in ME2, along with all the choices from ME1 such as who survived Virmire and whether Wrex is alive. It should record your romance options as well. *If you romanced Liara or anyone non-ME2-squad (even considering Lair of the Shadow Broker), this may manifest as "did not romance anyone." Unfortunately, this is the same message given for* actually *not romancing anyone, so the two circumstances may be confused. To avoid this, don't import an auto-save and hope for the best.*

If you realize you did it all wrong, have heart! The good people over at Mass Effect 2 Saves have your back. Just fill out the info and select a save close enough to your data. This can also be helpful if you missed a couple small things, but don't want to replay the whole game to get them. Just be careful their actions mirror yours.

Good luck, and good heart!

by Hypersigils

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2. Normandy SR-2 //

Return of the Normandy SR-2

The Alliance refitting of Normandy SR-2 hasn't brought a large amount of changes. However, there are a few things to be aware of.

The weapons locker has moved down to the newly available fifth floor, right next to the upgrade station, a shopping terminal, and a wardrobe. Here, you can buy new weapons and armor from the merchants you've visited at the Citadel (although there's a 10% surcharge if you buy from the ship), upgrade them, and outfit your squad. James and Steve Cortez usually hang out down here.

The fourth floor is unchanged, with cargo rooms and the engine. Javik's quarters (if you bought the From Ashes DLC) and Tali's place in Engineering are here.

The third floor has the med bay, where you can reset your powers or your squadmates' powers. Most of the rest is unchanged, although Liara has taken over Miranda's old quarters. Occasionally, you'll discover "Intel" out in the galaxy, and Liara's assistant Glyph can provide one of two possible upgrades from that Intel. Liara also has a Broker Terminal which sometimes shows interesting background info on your missions or the characters you've met. Aside from Liara, Garrus and Ashley/Kaidan are also on this floor.

The front of the second floor is unchanged: same galaxy map, same email terminal, different Yeoman who does the same thing, same Joker and EDI in the front. (Bear in mind there is a bugged spot on the floor just between Joker and EDI where you can stand and get completely stuck, forcing you to load from an earlier game. Use caution and save before going to the cockpit.) But the back of this floor has been completely redone. Your War Room lets you inspect your current War Assets and Galactic Readiness at any time, and use the QEC to talk across the galaxy at certain points.

The top floor is still your cabin.... although it's been stripped. All your old ship models/hamsters have been scattered around the ship, and you'll have to search the different rooms to get them back. Your old fish may also become reavailable at a certain point in the game, depending on some of the choices you made in Mass Effect 2. No Yeoman to feed them this time, although there's an automatic fish feeder purchasable from Elkoss Combine on the Citadel if you don't want to do it yourself.

Your map now shows you every main character who's on your ship, and which room they're currently in. Characters do sometimes wander around between missions, so check your map: if you see two squadmates in the same room, go take a look because there's usually something interesting going on.

by tenthousandthousand

3. Class Warfare: Updates

For the love of god, dat Class!

Mass Effect 3 has basically the same classes as Mass Effect 2, with a few balance changes discussed below. For detailed discussion of each class, see the Mass Effect 2 classes section.

Adept

The **Adept** can now detonate Pull with Throw. Since both those powers have extremely short cooldowns, the adept is now reasonably capable of killing enemies without squadmate assistance. The adept's handgun restriction is replaced with a low weight limit; generally, you'll want to play at minimum weight, meaning an SMG or very light assault rifle and nothing else. Because of how fast the adept recharges, you may go whole missions without firing your weapon.

Vanguard

The **Vanguard** gains the Nova power instead of a grenade power. This combines extremely well with Charge, and basically makes the vanguard completely unstoppable if played correctly. The vanguard's shotgun restriction is replaced with a moderate weight limit. Generally, you'll want to play at minimum weight, meaning quite possibly you might be wielding a shotgun and nothing else. You may be able to get away with an SMG or very light assault rifle on top of that. However, Biotic charge can be upgraded to provide a temporary damage boost to shotguns, and *only* shotguns, so choose your arsenal wisely.

Engineer

The **Engineer** gains Sentry Turret; basically a stationary drone, and Overload now damages barriers, bringing the Engineer into the no-longer-so-exclusive club of classes that can strip all defenses. The engineer's weight limit is identical to that of the adept, but the reliance on (hopefully) long-lasting drones makes low weight slightly less critical. It's still a good idea to minimize weight so drones can be re-spawned quickly as they die relatively easily. Engineers are the best are passive victories: relying on your drones and turrets to defeat enemies for you.

Infiltrator

The **Infiltrator**'s disruptor ammo now affects barriers as well as shields, much like the engineer's overload. The infiltrator's sniper rifle restriction is replaced with a moderate weight limit. The infiltrator is less power-reliant than the above classes, but you probably want to keep your weight as low as possible, especially if you're using a heavier sniper rifle like the Widow or Black Widow. Still, a sniper rifle is not well-suited to all combat, and you may want to carry an additional light weapon. With proper weapon upgrades, it's possible to wield an SMG with 90% less weight.

Soldier

The **Soldier** now enjoys a much wider variety of guns and mods. The Amplification perk for Concussive Shot allows the shot to benefit from the active ammo power, which is basically equivalent to giving the soldier weaker versions of overload, incinerate, and cryo blast. The soldier has a generous weight limit, and little reliance on powers, but it is still probably wise to avoid carrying unnecessary weight. Don't carry guns you never fire. But, if you decided to play the Soldier class, than you must love guns.

Sentinel

The **Sentinel**'s tech armor no longer detonates automatically, and they benefit from the changes to Overload mentioned above. The sentinel also receives a moderate weight limit like the vanguard and infiltrator, meaning they can go for a more weapon-centric approach than in Mass Effect 2. Note that Tech Armor has always increased cooldown times, and combined with excessive weight, this may be problematic. Like they were in Mass Effect 2, Sentinels are the quite possibly the best at absorbing damage like a sponge.

Notes

If you completed Mass Effect 2 beforehand, then these classes should feel and play similarly with minor differences. However one potentially *major* change is the ability for any class to use any weapon type. Each class has a weight limit, and the more power-heavy classes (Adept, Engineer, Sentinel) will have lower weight limits. You can exceed your weight limit, but will suffer a penalty to your power's cooldown times. This means that the advantage of the Soldier class is somewhat reduced.

by NYKevin

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4. Reputation

Does it Always *Have* to Precede Me?

Reputation is the third iteration of the morality system for Mass Effect debuting in Mass Effect 3. In the game, your reputation increases as you complete quests and make your decisions via the conversation wheel. Effectively, it behaves the same way it has functioned in the previous two games, so you can consult those guides if need be.

Higher reputation unlocks conversation options with all the various people you will speak with during your adventures. You will receive a set amount of Paragon or Renegade reputation for conversation choices and interrupts utilized. When you complete a mission, you will receive overall reputation points, increasing all reputation.

What *has* changed, however, is how Paragon (blue dialogue choices) and Renegade (red dialogue choices) are unlocked. Instead of requiring enough points into a Charm or Intimidate skill, or relying on total Paragon or Renegade points, the availability of these dialogue choices is mostly determined by the total combined points you have in the Reputation meter, whether they are Paragon *or* Renegade. This means that, even if you have almost entirely

nothing but Paragon points, you will still have access to Renegade options in the conversation wheel.

Be aware, however, that some character conversations will only have Paragon and Renegade options available if you have chosen one during *every* conversation with that character beforehand. Therefore, it is strongly urged that you use them whenever they are available.

by keiichiz28

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5. Priority: Missions

Sort Your Priorities, Seriously.

The missions in Mass Effect 3 make up the majority of play time during the single player mode. They also drastically factor into both your enjoyment of the game and what ending you will get. These missions can be broken up into several different kinds: Priority missions, side missions, and N7 missions.

Some of these are time-sensitive, meaning that you can fail them if you finish the act you acquired them in before finishing the mission. This page has a good description of this system. It's recommended that if you do have questions, to only access any number of links as you need to in order to avoid spoiling major plot points. A rule of thumb that is good to use is to complete all the missions that are available to you before you finish the main story mission of that act in the story.

It should be fairly clear which Priority mission is the dedicated plot mission, as any side mission will revolve around aiding that one mission. They typically involve going to the planet that is the focal point of the act and helping the war effort in some way. If you complete the main Priority mission before any others on that planet, they will be failed and incompletable -- but this does *not* mean the game will fail.

- *Fetch Quests*

While exploring the Citadel, which serves as your main hub in between missions, you may overhear conversations of people wanting to find some item. If you do, you'll automatically receive a mission to get that item for them. This can either involve scanning a planet in a particular system, or discovering that item during another mission. (Note: if you completed a mission but didn't find the item you needed for your fetch quest, you can buy it at the Spectre terminal on the Citadel for 1000 credits, or at your armory on the Normandy for 1100 credits, then turn in the fetch quest.)

These missions are purely voluntary and do not need to be completed or even attempted to finish the game. However, completing them will most often award new War Assets.

- *N7 Missions*

N7 missions are assigned to you periodically via your personal terminal and are generally required to be completed immediately. It is **strongly** recommended you complete any and all

available N7 missions before any available Priority missions, as they can be failed or become impossible to complete. N7 missions will most often allow you to meet old friends from previous missions (if they are alive from the second or first game) and help them with the war effort. Completing these missions will most often award new War Assets.

- *Priority Missions*

As ironic as it might sound, Priority missions should *not* be completed first. You should complete these only when all other missions have been completed. Any N7, fetch quests, or side missions are **strongly** recommended to be completed first, as many will be locked out if certain Priority missions are completed. These missions are directly tied to the main plot narrative of the game, and cannot become impossible to complete. Completing these missions most often award everything from new squadmates, weapons, war assets, and weapon or armor upgrades.

Note: Any weapon or item you may have missed and not picked up during a Priority mission can be purchased at one of various kiosks located on the Citadel Presidium after that mission has been completed.

by RCK0

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6. Scanning on the Run

Identifying... yup, it's a Reaper.

The "scan" function comes back for a last hurrah, but this time minerals aren't its focus. Instead, it's gained the magical property to seek out ships, people and artifacts alike. How? No time to think about it--you've got Reapers on your six. That's the only drawback: "area scanning" (RMB, PC version) in the Galaxy Map alerts nearby Reapers in war-torn zones. Once you've tipped them off enough, they'll come searching for you--and if they catch you, that's Game Over.

There are two main kinds of items your scanner picks up: War Assets and debris. War Assets, mostly found on planets, can be located by "area scan" and then extracted by a minigame not unlike mineral scanning in ME2--except you have a slower scanner and unlimited probes. Debris is most often the remains of a Fuel Depot, and moderate amounts of fuel can be salvaged from them. This makes interstellar travel much easier. War Assets are almost always found in Reaper-controlled systems, and Fuel Depots only get destroyed in the same.

Usually, there are two items in every system (except those containing a high-priority mission); one War Asset and one destroyed Fuel Depot. This may vary. A favored technique involves scanning near all planets, then randomly scanning for the fuel. Leave the fuel for your return trip, if you intend to visit the other systems in the cluster. If your scanning brings the Reapers around, do what you can in the system and then escape by flying to its edge. If there's anything left in the system, align your ship (you will enter the system on the same line your ship makes--e.g. facing left means you'll enter on the left side), reenter, grab what you can and get out. Reapers gain speed the more you're in the system, so be quick. Don't be too

afraid to touch the Reapers; unless their sprite is directly over yours, you're safe. Don't let it get that far.

You'll be able to see how much you've taken from a system or cluster by a percentage reading at the top of your screen. If you're looking for more War Assets, you want everything 100% (except the areas with nothing in them). If you're being pursued too closely by Reapers, do a mission and come back. They'll have moved on.

by Hypersigils

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7. Leveling Up

These are my skill points. There are many like them, but these are *mine*.

[Same deal here. Required XP/skill points available blah blah blah.]

8. Guns, Guns, Guns III

Return of the Guns

[How do weapons work this time around? And why would I even bother with other guns when I have a Black Widow?]

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9. Biotic Abilities

I Find Your Lack of Warp Disturbing.

Introduction

Biotic abilities in ME3 have been vastly improved over their predecessors in what you can do with them, primarily with the biotic explosion system and the sheer number of biotic powers. This section is split into four subsections: abilities available in the vanilla ME3 single player mode (no DLC), abilities available in DLC, abilities available in only the multiplayer mode, and a subsection detailing biotic explosions (henceforth called "BEs"). Each subsection will be divided into the various biotic ability with my player notes about the power. A list of every biotic ability and descriptions of them can be found here

Biotic Explosions

"BE"s are generally the primary damage dealer for any biotic character. They do double damage against armor and barriers but half damage against shields. Against health, BEs do their base amount of damage. In ME3, BEs have been greatly improved as opposed to ME1 and ME2. They are easier to perform and it is easier to tell when it is possible to create a BE. They generally have a large radius and can take out whole clusters of enemies.

Some powers, like Singularity, will "prime" an enemy for a biotic explosion -- which sets the enemy up to explode if another power is used on them. Other powers, like Throw, will "detonate" an enemy that has previously been primed and deal bonus damage. And still other powers, like Warp, can both prime *and* detonate biotic explosions -- but it will only be able to do one or the other on a particular enemy. In other words, Warp can't be used to prime an enemy and then re-used on the same enemy to detonate them.

Single Player

Biotic abilities are available to the Adept, Sentinel, and Vanguard classes initially, with the choice to add an extra ability on any class by unlocking bonus powers, some of which are biotic powers. Bonus powers are made available by talking to your squadmates between missions. These are marked on the wiki page above by an (AT).

- **Singularity**

Mostly unchanged from the previous games, Singularity activates a gravitional ball that pulls in and tosses enemies who are caught in its radius. Highly useful power for both crowd control and damage through detonations. Projectile power so it can be dodged by many enemies. Only lifts unarmored and unshielded enemies but primes BEs on all enemies.

- **Warp**

One of the most versatile biotic powers in the game. Evolutions enable it to weaken enemies and create some of the most powerful BEs in the game. Very little crowd control potential. Projectile power so it can be dodged. Weaker against shielded enemies but still primes and detonates against them. Both primes and can detonate any type of explosion.

- **Throw**

If the name isn't clear enough, Throw hurls enemies away from you. And if they happened to be near a ledge, it can insta-kill them. Highly useful detonation power that allows for quick explosions. A notable evolution allows for two projectiles to be fire at once to seek out multiple targets. Detonates any type of explosion but does not prime.

- **Pull**

Useful for crowd control but is not as effective for BEs because it only primes on unshielded and unarmored enemies, whereas other powers prime on all enemies. One evolution allows it to shoot two projectiles at once which, when combined with double throw, allows for simultaneous explosions on unprotected enemies. You may find that Pull is best used for ripping the riot shield right out of the arms of any Cerberus Guardian headed your way.

- **Shockwave**

Useful detonating power for any type of explosion that has evolutions that greatly increase the damage of BEs. Warp followed by this creates the most powerful BE in the vanilla game. Shockwaves can pass through cover but is blocked by Guardian shields. Shockwave does not track enemies so it can be difficult to aim.

- **Reave**

With area reave (Rank 4 radius), this becomes incredibly powerful as a way to prime multiple targets or to simply do damage to targets. It also provides damage reduction and hits instantly so it cannot be dodged. Reave can also detonate BEs which adds to its already impressive utility. Very effective power for small groups of more powerful enemies or anything, really.

- **Stasis**

Stasis is great for disabling enemies because it can freeze any unarmored enemy and with the Rank 6 stasis bubble evolution it can freeze multiple enemies who enter into the affected area, setting them up for BEs as well as leaving them unprotected against gunfire. Stasis hits instantly so it cannot be dodged. One major new change in Stasis from the previous games is that enemies locked under it *will* still take damage. This makes the power much more useful.

- **Biotic Charge**

(Exclusive to Vanguard-class players)

With this power, the Vanguard becomes the most mobile player in the game. Biotic charge also refills your barriers completely with the Rank 6 Barrier evolution, and can hit up to three clustered targets with the Rank 4 radius evolution. Along with all of this, biotic charge detonates any type of explosion, tech or biotic. Biotic charge is high risk, high reward, because it can put you in a dangerous position if you charge into a cluster and underestimate their numbers. With a light arsenal and high bonus to power cool-down, Charge can be re-activated in quick succession for maximum effect.

- **Nova**

A new power in the series, Nova synchronizes perfectly with Biotic Charge. It releases small explosion around the user that does not require you to worry about cooldown times. It can be used right after other powers, **but it consumes your entire barrier** without the half-blast evolution. It is the other signature Vanguard power and assists in clearing out enemies after a biotic charge. It provides invulnerability during the animation so it is incredibly useful for staying alive while biotic charge regenerates. Detonates any type of explosion but does not prime.

- **Barrier**

A strictly protective power that increases your damage reduction while it is active but also reduces your cooldown speed -- this makes Barrier function almost identically to Tech Armor. When it is used again after previously activating it, your character sends out a small explosion as the power dissipates. The explosion detonates primed targets and lifts unarmored and unshielded enemies and priming them for BEs.

- **Cluster Grenade**

Very powerful grenade power that detonates any explosion and deals great damage on its own. Great for clearing out groups of weaker enemies or anyone hiding behind cover. As this

is not strictly a "power", it has no cooldown time, allowing you to throw as many grenades as you have in your inventory as quickly as you want.

- **Lift Grenade**

Grenade that detonates any explosion and lifts unarmored and unshielded enemies off the ground and has them float in the air for a short period of time, priming them for BEs. Very useful for stopping enemies who are charging your position. Like all grenade powers, it has no cooldown time.

- **Warp Ammo**

One of, if not the best ammo powers in the game. Warp ammo is effective against three of the four defenses (Barriers, Armor, and Health) and goes well with biotics, dealing extra bonus damage to primed targets. Warp ammo functions great as a bonus power for classes who either have no or limited ammo powers (like Sentinels and Infiltrators), or for classes with a focus on biotic usage already (Adepts, Vanguards).

Downloadable Content Powers

Downloadable content for Mass Effect 3 brings additional powers to the player's selection -- mostly as selectable bonus powers.

- **Dark Channel**

(From Ashes)

This power creates a damanging biotic field on enemies, which deals damage to them over the duration of the power's effect on them. Dark Channel also has the interesting ability to "jump" from one enemy to another if the enemy affected by the power dies -- which reduces the need to re-cast the power. Amazing power to cast and let it wreck a group of enemies. Only primes enemies for weak explosions relative to other powers but it deals constant damage for a very long time (about 30 seconds).

- **Slam**

(From Ashes)

A pretty good single target power that deals respectable damage to enemies but only works against unarmored and unshielded enemies. Detonates explosions but the explosion happens when the enemy is in the air so it generally does not damage enemies surrounding the target.

- **Flare**

(Omega)

Think of flare almost like Warp on crack cocaine. This power detonates a *very* powerful explosion across a large area. It has a fairly long cooldown time, but otherwise is great for almost any environment or enemy. Does not prime enemies, but does detonate them on top of its already impressive damage.

- **Lash**

(Omega)

Like a lasso made of biotic energy, Lash grabs ahold of enemies and yanks them towards you with tremendous force and damge. While it has little effect on multiple enemies, it is great for getting a stubborn target away from its position. Similarly to Pull, Lash can be used to rip a Cerberus Guardian's riot shield from their arms.

- **Dominate**

(Leviathan)

Similarly to AI Hacking or Sabotage on synthetic enemies, Dominate confuses an organic enemy and makes them attack their allies for you. Dominate is great for getting enemies to stop targeting you while they are forced to deal with a traitorous enemy. Best used on the more powerful enemies, to increase the odds that they will survive for more than a second or two while they attack everyone else.

Multiplayer

The multiplayer mode contains some characters with completely unique powers not available in any other mode with the exception of a few powers that are also available in DLC packs.

- **Annihilation Field**

Annihilation field has incredible potential when in the hands of a skilled player. It is highly recommended that you take the drain evolution at Rank 6 because it allows the user to use any damage caused to the shields of enemies caught in the field to restore your own shields. Allows for very rapid BEs because it primes any enemies caught in its radius.

- **Biotic Focus**

Probably the most useful power in the Turian Cabal's arsenal. Much of this utility comes from the Rank 6 Biotic Shield evolution, which partially restores the barriers of the player, granting a period of invulnerability and stopping any damage over time (DoT) effects.

- **Biotic Hammer**

This (along with the Krogan Warlord's other hammer power) can cause serious damage but can put the player in a very dangerous position if used near bosses that can instakill. Detonates all explosions. Biotic Hammer is best used when swarmed by weaker enemies, like husks.

- **Biotic Orbs**

Most of the utility from this power comes from the boost to recharge speed while they are active, not the damage they can cause. Detonates explosions, and that's about all they are useful for in offensive capability.

- **Biotic Slash**

Deals considerable damage but requires a long animation which leaves you exposed. Can travel through walls and detonate explosions. When used near teammates, this power makes their screens shake which can cause serious dislike towards you.

- **Biotic Sphere**

With the Warp Effect evolution, this power has the ability to prime BEs. It can be used as an offensive power but that requires a very aggressive play style.

- **Dark Sphere**

Launches a slow-moving ball of pure biotic energy. Has a unique mechanic in which the sphere can be detonated at any time to deal huge damage to enemies caught in the radius. Otherwise it sticks where it lands to cause damage over time to enemies near it and primes them for BEs. The detonation of the sphere can detonate any explosion.

- **Lash**

Lash almost requires the Rank 6 Shield Penetration evolution to be useful at higher difficulties because otherwise it only works against unarmored and unshielded enemies. Detonates explosions and can incapacitate enemies for a short while. Also primes for BEs and is a power that can take away Guardian shields.

- **Poison Strike**

Poison Strike acts like Biotic Charge without a target lock. This allows it to be used to traverse maps very quickly. This power has little use as an offensive ability when used on consoles because aiming is incredibly difficult and turning around to face the enemy you just charged is a slower process than on PCs. Does not detonate or prime any explosion, but does cause a damage over time effect.

- **Seeker Swarm**

Like Biotic Orbs, Seeker Swarm provides bonuses while they are surrounding the user. However, because the Collector Adept also has priming powers, Seeker Swarm can be used to detonate those powers to deal fairly high damage.

- **Smash**

A very similar power to Biotic Slash, Smash has a long animation, heavy damage, and causes teammates' screens to shake. Can prime BEs and detonate any explosion. Travels through walls. Great for disrupting the enemy's line.

by RCK0

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10. Tech Abilities

May The Cloak Be With You.

[What tech powers do we have? Who has what? And how do I also detonate dis shit?]

11. Building Your Squad

Liara's back. That's all that really matters.

Thank you for using the demo version of Squad Building. Would you like to upgrade to the professional version? So don't worry, this is is the easiest squad building you'll do in the entire series. This is for a couple of reasons. First, you have a lot less people to to choose from compared to Mass Effect 2, but in return, each character does have additional powers.

Kaidan Alenko

It's good to have our Jack-of-All Trades back, isn't it? As a **Sentinel**, Kaidan is able to easily adapt to any situation. He may not have Warp but his ability to use powerful Assault Rifles almost makes up for it. Kaidan is great if you need a support unit. He pairs up with Liara spectacularly well when it comes to setting off Biotic Detonations.

Ashley Williams

So Ashley decided to not only let her hair down, but to also become one of the most offensively-powerful squadmates in the game. With Inferno Grenade and Concussive Shot she isn't as restricted in support as she was in the first game and with Marksman, she can pick enemies off with her Sniper Rifle with ease. With both the Sniper Rifle and Assault Rifle, Ashley remains an effective unit throughout the game.

Tali'Zorah vas Normandy

Tali is back again! And she brought more drones to play with! Tali is great if you need a squadmate to help control the battlefield. Unlike the last game, she isn't just effective against inorganic enemies anymore. She plays very similarly to the last game with her Shotguns and Heavy Pistols, but is now much more versatile with her additional abilities. She's finally come into her own as one of the best support units in the game and can work wonders in herding and stopping enemies, allowing you or her to finish them off.

Liara T'Soni

Warp Ammo? On my Asari? It's more likely than you think. Liara has had an upgrade since we saw her last. She can once again use the ever important Warp. On lower difficulties Singularity is incredibly powerful, as it can be upgraded to have a cooldown time that is much less than the actual duration of the power -- meaning you'll be able to use it non-stop at your leisure. Liara is no longer just a support class. With her Warp Ammo she'll be helping the squad put a serious hurt on enemies -- all of this even though she's only using Submachine Guns and Heavy Pistols.

Garrus Vakarian

Mass Effect just isn't Mass Effect without Mr. Vakarian, and he's just as effective as he was in the last two games. In fact, he's even better! Garrus isn't just a great offensive unit now. He can now use Proximity Mine -- which is a great way to help control the battlefield. Garrus has received the fewest changes, but that's probably because he didn't need many. He works well in just about any team you put him on. His Assault Rifle and Sniper Rifle make him as versatile as ever.

James Vega

James is one of the more divisive characters in the Mass Effect franchise. He's another Soldier unit, and provided you kept Ashley alive, he can be almost entirely redundant in your squad. The key difference is that James is suited for close range with his Shotguns and Assault Rifles over Ashley's Sniper Rifles. Carnage makes a return but James doesn't have much in ways of powerful support.

EDI

That's right, the old blue holographic chess-piece AI finally gets her own legs. In many ways, EDI has taken over a similar role filled by Miranda from Mass Effect 2. With her ability to use Overload (always a good thing) EDI is surprisingly adaptable. Overall, EDI is a great choice for any team that needs a tech support.

DLC Characters

Javik

Unlocked if you choose to purchase the From Ashes DLC pack, Javik provides you with a mix of combat and biotic power, as well as some critical background information of the Mass Effect universe. As a squadmate, he uses Assault Rifles and Heavy Pistols to lay the hurt with bullets and has Lift Grenades, Pull, and Dark Channel to agitate enemies and control the battlefield with biotics.

Nyreen Kandros

Available temporarily during the Omega DLC, Nyreen is a very adaptable character. With Assault Rifles and Heavy Pistols she can do a great deal of damage, but also she can help control the battlefield with Biotic Protector. Were she with you for the main game, she could be a very powerful squadmate.

Aria T'Loak

Available temporarily during the Omega DLC, Aria is finally a playable character. She is an incredibly powerful Adept. With abilities like Flare and Lash, she can devastate enemies with her Biotics. Howver, she can also bring firepower with her Shotguns and Submachine Guns. Aria's abilties make her an offensive powerhouse for the time she's with you.

by Sreyb

12. Love Interests

Flatterer.

Heartbroken because of ME2? Rejoice! The gang all comes together for one last hurrah. Returning members such as Ashley and Tali are open to a male Shepard, as well as new crew member Steve Cortez. Femshep gets her Garrus back, as well as new crew member Samantha Traynor. Either gendered Shepard can find solace in the arms of Kaidan Alenko, Liara T'Soni and Diana Allers. ME2 favorites such as Miranda Lawson, Thane, Jacob, Jack and Kelly Chambers are present as well, but suffer from a reduction to their involvement.

No calculations about who's going to stick around the longest this time, ladies and gents. Whoever you choose to fill your embrace, make sure they'll go with you to the end of the world, and beyond. Make your peace and choose your waifu/hasubando, because at the end of this game the feels train will be permanently brakes-less.

by Hypersigils

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13. Galaxy At War

How To Ensure Your Assets Are Ready in a Down Economy

Well, the invasion has begun and now all races must stand together to fight the Reapers or face being destroyed. Too bad internal strife, low morale, and Reaper and Cerberus strike teams are mucking it up. Galaxy At War is the system by which Mass Effect 3 measures the overall capability of the galaxy to resist the Reapers, listed as your Effective Military Strength. EMS breaks down into two components: War Assets (a flat number) and Galactic Readiness (a percentage).

War Assets are the accumulated military strength of the galaxy, gathered from your decisions and actions not only through ME3 but the series as a whole. Each decision either adds or, yes, even subtracts from this total (although this will not happen often, so don't panic about losing everything). How each choice effects this pool is left to the player to discover. Everything from entire alien fleets to trained scientists, doctors, soldiers, and anyone with something to offer may be shown in your War Assets.

Galactic Readiness acts as a multiplier to your overall War Assets. By default, it is set at 50% -- this means that your Effective Military Strength will only be half of your total War Assets. There are several different ways you can improve it. The quickest way to improve readiness is via the multiplayer Co-Op missions. The galaxy is broken up into 5 territories and specific cooperative missions that are completed within those territories raise its overall preparedness by 5% and completing an “Unknown Map” mission raises every territory by 3%.

If you don't want to do multiplayer, you can also use the N7 HQ to increase your Galactic Readiness. The Galaxy at War section of the HQ allows you to use strike fleets to secure different hotspots within each territory.

As stated before, your Effective Military Strength is your total War Assets multiplied by your Galactic Readiness and becomes locked in once you hit "the Point of No Return".

Before a certain major mission, Admiral Hackett will warn that to go through with the mission will "lock in" the galactic alliance, and you will have to plays your hand and the Reapers will be forced to respond. Once you accept the mission, your Effective Military Strength is locked in for the rest of the game and its total determines how the final moments play out. As your EMS increases, the alliances' ability to resist the Reapers increase and the more effective the Crucible becomes. Higher EMS numbers result in more of the galaxy's infrastructure remaining and the lower the EMS the more worse off everyone becomes.

If you are anxious about achieving the best outcomes, your EMS will need to be at approximately 4000, which will require either some additional DLC or some time spent improving Galactic Readiness. If you download the free Extended Cut DLC, you only need 3100 EMS to get the best endings, which is achievable even without really worrying about Galactic Readiness.

For a full writeup on EMS game-by-game, read further.

by FaalKorum

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14. Point of No Return

You're in my chair.

There are two main "points of no return" in Mass Effect 3, which lock out some or all quests.

The first point of no return comes once you begin Priority: Tuchanka, and will lock out some (but not all) of your Citadel fetch quests, as well as many conversation options available on the Citadel, especially among your squadmates. However, other Citadel fetch quests CANNOT be completed until AFTER Tuchanka, when more of the galaxy map is unlocked.

These are the specific missions that cannot be completed after Priority: Tuchanka. Note that they will stay in your quest log as uncompleted missions unless they are finished before Priority: Tuchanka:

Benning: Evidence / Citadel: Alien Medi-Gel Formula / Citadel: Barla Von / Citadel: Biotic Amp Interfaces / Citadel: Hanar Diplomat / Citadel: Improved Power Grid / Ismar Frontier: Prototype Components

The second and much bigger point of no return comes after Priority: Horizon has been completed and the next Priority mission is about to start. Once you start this next mission, you will be locked in to the main storyline and not be able to complete ANY side quests or DLC until the game is complete. Because of this, Effective Military Strength is also locked in and cannot be changed for the rest of the game. Admiral Hackett will mention this in-game, saying that this is the start of the assault on the Reapers. At that point, you will have the opportunity to back out and finish any side quests before you begin the mission.

by tenthousandthousand

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15. Downloadable Content

Singleplayer

This content is exclusive to the one-player story. Does not affect multiplayer in any fashion.

- **From Ashes**

This DLC adds one Priority mission that is can be completed at any time. You will have access to a new squadmate and a whole new kind of alien assault rifle. This new squadmate will give you crucial information on the past of the Mass Effect universe, but is not required to complete the game. Unlike Zaeed and Kasumi in ME2, this squadmate is fully integrated into the main game and will interact with your other squadmates both on and off missions. Strongly recommended if you are a big fan of Mass Effect's lore and want to learn more.

- **Mass Effect 3: Extended Cut**

The Extended Cut offers additional content for the game's conclusion. It's 100% free of charge and serves as BioWare's way of including some additional closure to the story. Near-mandatory even on a first playthrough.

- **Firefight Pack**

The firefight pack gives you access to seven new weapons: two sniper rifles, two assault rifles, one shotgun, and two SMGs. All can be absolutely deadly and very useful in the right hands.

- **Leviathan**

Leviathan comes with ten new missions and ten new locations. In terms of weaponry, Shep gets an assault rifle, a shotgun, several weapon mods, nearly a dozen war assets, and an item for your personal cabin. This DLC comes highly recommended, as it sheds light on the origins of your enemies and provides some ample mystery and intrigue.

- **Groundside Resistance Pack**

Like Firefight, offers seven new weapons of varying types. Only for those who just want a larger arsenal.

- **Alternate Appearance Pack 1**

Unlike Mass Effect 2, outfits aren’t just cosmetic. They give passive bonuses in battle. In this pack, players get three squadmate outfits and a single armor set for Shepard. Oddly enough, there is no "Alternate Appearance Pack 2", so do not bother looking.

- **Omega**

Like Leviathan, this is a story-based DLC. It’s fairly lengthy (comparable to Leviathan). You get to fight alongside Aria and the first female Turian introduced in the game. However, these allies don’t permanently join the squad. There are five missions spread across two locations. Two new enemy types make their appearance in this DLC (one from the Mass Effect comic books) and players get two assault rifles, five weapon mods, four assets, and an item for your personal cabin. Very combat-centric.

- **Genesis 2**

Just like in Mass Effect 2, players can create a Shepard starting from this game and have the chance to make the key decisions from the last two games while also filling in as much of the past story as possible. If you have the first two games, this will be mostly redundant, unless you'd like to make a new character in the third game and be able to forge a path from past quests without having to fully replay all three games.

- **Citadel**

This is the last DLC to be released for the single player campaign. Citadel contains a small plot line that will see you team up with practically every single squadmate from all of the previous games. After you complete it, you'll have access to a whole new area on the citadel rife with mini games and a virtual battle arena that allows you to fight alongside old friends and earn new armor or credits. As this was the last release for Mass Effect 3, Citadel is extremely character-focused and functions as a "love letter" of sorts for the fans of the series.

Multiplayer

All multiplayer content is absolutely free and adds new maps, character types, weapons, mods, and objectives. It is strongly urged to download all DLC for multiplayer if you plan on playing, as not having any of the content will preclude you from playing with those who do, as it is way beyond mere maps.

by Sreyb

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16. Multiplayer

You down with DLC? (Yeah, you know me)

First off, to get the best experience make sure you have all the multiplayer DLC. There's five of them (Resurgence, Rebellion, Earth, Retaliation, Reckoning. Wii U version has only the first 3) and all of them are free. Once you have them downloaded and installed, you are good to go to play with most other people online. This is essential, as you can only play online with those who have the same DLC packs as you, so to maximize the pool of potential players you can be matched with, be sure to have them all.

Buy War Bonds!

So why play the MP component of ME3? Well, in addition to being fun it also contributes to your single player experience. In ME3, Shepard must collect War Assets for the Final Battle

to take on the Reapers. War Assets have an efficiency rating and section of the galaxy map tied to them. Completing matches will improve the efficiency of any War Assets based in that sector. By default, War Assets have a 50% efficiency minimum and lose about 1-3% efficiency every 24 hours (real time).

Now suppose you really don't want to errand boy/girl when the galaxy is at stake but you really want War Assets. Fortunately, the multiplayer has you covered. When a class (Adept, Engineer, Soldier, etc.) reaches the max level of 20, it may be 'promoted' to the singleplayer campaign as a War Asset (N7 Special Ops Team). This resets that class -- and all characteres in that class -- back to level 1, adds 75 War Assets (tied to the Earth Systems Alliance sector), and adds 10 points to your N7 Score (more on that later). Promoting is also a good way to respec your kit if you can't spare a Respec Card (an item that resets an entire kits powers).

With this, you can have an unlimited amount of War Assets for single player, enough to guarantee the best possible outcome of your story.

Let's all to the Lobby. To get ourselves some treats!

When in a lobby

, you will see many stats and options available to you. To the right, you can see the list of players with their kit, and three rotating stats (red stats indicate N7 level, yellow stats are Challenge Points, and the blue stats indicate the number of times that class has been promoted. Stats are only a rough indicator of skill). If you click on the player in question, you can find out their equipment and weapons that they currently have equipped.

On the left, you can see a list of options to alter your character. Mission Settings will let the host adjust whether the match can be public or private and choose the map/enemy/difficulty. Certain options allow for an experience boost if chosen (in this image, the Hazard map and Unknown Enemy options both add 15% XP modifiers). Also, you can see which sector the map lies and what your Galactic Readiness is on the map. Powers, Weapons, and Appearance work just like in the single player, with Appearance options being unlocked as you unlock kits for that character. The store and equipment will be discussed in the next major section, but using both is essential to being successful in the multiplayer.

On the edges you can see various bits of information like map information on the top, the kit (including the ability to change kits below the model) and credit count to the far left, and the ability to invite friends/leave the lobby below the list of players.

The equipment makes the man.

None of the kits are as awesome as Commander Shepard. So to compensate, multiplayer kits can slap on some equipment to make them stronger. Your equipment screen should look something like this

. On the right are supplies (also called consumables), which both have a total limit on the bottom and an in-match limit (how many you can carry with you into the actual mission) on the bottom right of the icon. Each consumable has its uses, though they are best used in a tight spot like objective waves:

- **Cobra Missile Launchers** are single-use missile launchers that fire one missile. It has no homing or lock-on abilities, so aim appropriately -- generally at the enemy's feet to avoid a wasted shot. Cobra Missiles are *extremely* powerful, and it's all but guaranteed anything alive that is caught in the blast radius will no longer be so, although rarely some enemy types will survive due to various reasons, mostly related to how the game computes cover and blast radius.
- **Ops Survival Packs** instantly restore a player's shields and health, add an additional 1000 shields for 10 seconds, and provide about 2 seconds of invincibility. Best used as preventative medicine. These are best used if you are about to die but have no effective cover available. If you have been downed, Ops packs will do nothing.
- **Medi-Gel** will cause a downed (but not executed) player to instantly revive with full health. Best used in an emergency when you know someone else cannot revive you. Medi-gel is best used for the last man standing as a final resort to avoid a mission failure.
- **Thermal Clip Packs** instantly restore a player's ammo/grenade count and provides an additional 100% weapons damage. Best used when you need grenades NOW. These are fairly common and generally not essential, as ammo is usually plentiful around each and every map. But if you need ammo or grenades and you're in a tight pinch, it'll do.

Equipment on the left are one-time consumable objects (except Gear) that augment your kit's stats like increased shielding, increased damage, faster recharge time, better stability when firing, etc. There are four slots for bonuses. Higher rank consumables have a bigger effect than their lower rank counterparts and like most bonuses in ME3, they are additive and not multiplicative. Slotting on equipment is critical to success on higher level gameplay, especially Gold and Platinum difficulties..

- **Ammo Bonus** adds an ammo power to your gun. Ammo bonuses function identically to the single player ammo powers, but it lasts only a single match. If you have two weapons, the bonus is applied to both weapons automatically.
- **Weapon Bonus** amplifies the output of a weapon, melee, or headshots depending on the bonus equipped. Keep in mind that weapon bonuses only effect that specific class of weapon, so equip your arsenal appropriately.
- **Armor Bonus** amplifies the strength of the kit itself. This includes faster movement, stronger shields, better stability, and faster power recharge. These are mostly passive and give you better survivability.
- **Gear Bonus** is unique. First, it does *not* consume itself when a match is done, so they can re-used ad inifinitum. Second, several of the bonuses are not replicated by the other equipment slots. This includes Grenade Capacity (increases grenade count), Thermal Clip Storage Pack (increases spare ammo), and Batarian Gauntlet (turns your heavy melee on any kit into a Batarian Falcon Punch at somewhat reduced power). Most of these bonuses are much lower their their consumable counterparts, typically hovering around 15% when maxed to level V. But their permanence makes them great to have at all times.

Blessed is he who in the name of good faith, buys things from the store with his credits. Shepard 25:17

Now for the store. The store is a bit complicated, but you can buy one of several packs, each with its own level of items, weapons, and characters.

The first is the inventory system. You can check your current inventory by looking at your N7 HQ, which is linked in the sidebar. Players start out with twelve of the basic Human kits (two for each class, one of each gender) and 5 starter weapons (the Avenger, Shuriken, Predator, Katana, and Mantis). In order to unlock better weapons, more kits, weapon mods, consumables/equipment, and gear, players must purchase packs from the store.

The second thing is the pack system. Packs contain 5 items (except Jumbo Equipment Packs, which have 10). The first slot in all packs contains consumables (Jumbo Equipment Packs have 4 slots for consumables), with the remaining slots giving out equipment and items (Jumbo Equipment Packs only have equipment and additional consumables). Items are "leveled up" like their single-player counterparts. For example, to unlock the Avenger X, one would first need to unlock the Avenger IX, and so on. Higher weapon levels generally have slightly decreased weight, slightly increased damage or fire rates, and increased ammo capacity. So don't think a Widow X is worlds away superior to your Widow IV.

This system of requiring the previous level is consistent with weapon mods, gear, and character appearance options. Unlocks are randomized, but their rarity in a specific pack is not. Each pack will list a guaranteed item rarity level and will have small (usually 1-5%) chance of an item of a higher rarity level appearing.

Which now brings us to the rarity system. There are four tiers of rarity:

- The first is **Common** items (blue), which includes the starter items and some basic weapon mods. Recruit Packs are great for unlocking Common items.
- The next is the **Uncommon** itmes (grey) which includes some useful weapon mods, general purpose weapons, versatile characters, some basic gear, and the Reset Powers card. Veteran Packs are great for unlocking Uncommon items.
- The next rank are the **Rare** items (gold) which consist of strong kits, advanced weapon mods, consumable capacity increases, specialized gear, and powerful weapons. Spectre and Premium Spectre Packs are great for getting Rare items, along with Arsenal Packs (for Rare weapons) and Reserves Packs (for Rare characters).
- The final tier is the coveted **Ultra-Rare** items (black N7), made up of a few unique characters and generally the best weapons and character classes available in the game. Ultra-Rares can only be found in four packs (Spectre, Premium Spectre, Arsenal, Reserves) though the odds of getting an ultra-rare is surprisingly low.

And now actually playing multiplayers...

So you finally load into a match. It looks quite similar to starting a ME3 mission in the single player, but there's other people and they seem to be smarter than Liara and Vega. First off, remember that since you are in the multiplayer mode that:

A) You cannot pause the game to select powers. The game continues as you select weapons or powers.

B) You only have three active powers available at a maximum, and all are conveniently hot-buttoned for quick use.

A short timer will count down, and the match will begin. Rounds end when:

A) The objective is finished (applies only to waves 3, 6, and 10). Objectives given are randomized in each mission.

B) And the wave budget is depleted. Killing enemies takes out part of the wave budget and causes another enemy to respawn. Bigger and badder enemies take a bigger portion of the wave budget. Harder difficulties spawn bigger and badder enemies and also have bigger wave budgets as well. So to finish a wave, you have to kill or destroy all enemies.

While it depends on what kit and weapon you are using, killing smaller enemies (like Husks and Troopers) is usually more time-effective than killing bigger enemies (like Primes and Atlases) when finishing a wave budget.

There are 10 waves in total, plus a 2 minute extraction "bonus" wave. Extracting gives a XP and credit bonus, so it's always a good idea to be in the extraction circle when those two minutes are up. However, you do not need to survive the extraction round for the mission to be considered a victory.

As for ammo, there are ammo boxes with Thermal Clips and Grenades for players to use. These boxes will respawn ammo and boxes are shared by all teammates, so it is possible for teammates to suck ammo dry and leaving other players in the dust. Try to share.

Down, but not out. But will be out if you don't get there quickly!

If a player's health reaches zero, they will go "down". The announcer will alert you to that (along with a first aid symbol above their body) and most of the time they can be revived by moving over their body and reviving them for three seconds (same as single player). Revived players will get back on their feet with partial health. It is in everyone's best interest to make sure you clear the area before reviving someone lest you go down as well. Players who are down can use Medigel to instantly revive themselves, making communication key to avoid wasting anyone's time or resources.

The exceptions to this rule are stomps and "sync" (instant) kills. Most enemies (usually Troopers) have the ability to stomp a downed player before they bleed out. When a player is downed, any nearby enemies will usually approach that player and attempt to execute that person, which will kill that player for the duration of the round. Keep in mind that players who are downed in populated areas can be executed fairly quickly, so try to avoid becoming swarmed by baddies.

The other way to die is sync kills (possessed by most bosses). Sync kills occur when a boss enemy type performs an animation that permanently downs a player for the rest of the round. All sync kills occur at melee range and are preceded by a small warning (typically a melee attack). Try and maintain some distance between you and a boss to avoid getting sync killed. Remember: only **boss** enemies can sync kill. This includes Brutes, Banshees, ATLAS mechs, Praetorians, and Scions. Regular enemies, such as Geth or Collector Troopers, **cannot** sync kill. The notable exception is the Cerberus Phantom, so mind yourself.

Objectify me.

To spice up the game with a little variety, waves 3, 6, and 10 will have an objective that all players must complete. During objective waves, *enemies will spawn non-stop until the*

objective is completed and a timer to finish the objective will start. If the entire team dies or time expires before the objective is completed, the mission will end in a failure. Completing objective waves will grant credits and XP bonuses, along with a possible credit bonus based on how fast the objective is completed.

- **Assassination** - The team must kill 4 targets (typically tough enemies like Atlases and Primes) in succession highlighted by the diamond. These enemies have more health than usual and if you can kill multiple enemies (including the target) at once you can switch which enemy type will be the target next. For example if you kill a Prime along with two Rocket Troopers in a single blow, you may trick the game to make Rocket Troopers the next target (which are much easier to take down than Primes).
- **Devices** - The team must deactivate 4 devices in succession, as highlighted by the diamond on the map. This can be a particularly tough objective, as it takes around 10-11 seconds to fully deactivate a device and it must not be interrupted or else a player has to restart the hack from the beginning. Try and distract the enemy away from the device so that the player can hack it in safety. Infiltrators with fully upgraded cloak duration can remain cloaked during the entire duration of each deactivation, making them valuable assets in these rounds.
- **Hack** - The team must remain in a highlighted circle after activating a computer highlighted on the map. A certain amount of points must be uploaded to finish the hack. The more players in the circle, the more points are uploaded/second and the faster the hack is finished. Try to get all 4 players in the area to maximize hack speed and hasten the round.
- **Retrieval** - Added in the Rebellion DLC, Retrieval tasks the team to bring two packages to the extraction zone, one right after the other and highlighted on the map. Picking up the device forces the player to move only at walking pace. Attempting to sprint or using a movement power (like Biotic Charge) will make the player drop the device. Character classes that are "tanks" (Geth Juggernaut, Krogan Sentinel) suffer a smaller movement penalty as they are already fairly immobile, and so can function greatly during these rounds. Also, any movement bonus granted to the player through equipment or power upgrades *will* increase walking speed while carrying the objective (although only slightly).
- **Escort** - Added with the Earth DLC, Escort pits the team to activate and move a Drone to an upload location. The drone is highlighted on the map while the upload location is as well. The drone will move only when atleast one player is within the highlighted area surrounding the drone. To compensate for moving into terrible locations, the Drone can shock enemies and restore your shields from time to time while inside the circle. Having more players near the drone will increase its movement speed, so sticking together is essential.

Bronze. Silver. Gold. And also Platinum. It's like super-Gold.

When it comes to difficulty, each succesive setting increases both the strength and durability of the enemies as well as the prevalence with which they spawn in each round. A Guardian on Bronze is noticeably weaker than a Guardian on Platinum, as the Platinum Guardian will have both more healthpoints in addition to more powerful attacks. Therefore, you are going to be facing much tougher enemies on Gold and Platinum difficulties and at much earlier rounds than on Bronze or Silver.

For example, the Cerberus Atlas makes its first appearance during Wave 7 on Bronze, but is seen by Wave 3 on Gold (and in higher numbers).

Enemies spawn based on the faction that is on the field. Against Geth, you will be confronting Geth Troopers alongside Hunters, Pyros, Bombers, Rocket Troopers, and Primes to support them.

The exception to this single-faction rule is on Platinum difficulty, in which enemies of multiple factions can spawn at random -- but the faction in play will consist of the majority of the enemy forces.

On average, missions take between 10 to 30 (typically 20) minutes to finish, depending on difficulty. Player skill, selected equipment, classes, and levels will determine how effective each player is. On average, XP earned is on the order of 100k/200k/300k/400k XP, determined by the difficulty level of Bronze/Silver/Gold/Platinum, respectively. Each and every experience point that is earned during a mission is shared among all players, meaning two players who each earn 75,000 points would earn the same total XP at the end of the match if one had earned 100,000 and the other 50,000. Likewise, the amount of credits earned will generally be around 19k/33k/85k/140k, depending on difficulty.

Remember that you can only get credits from finishing objectives and extracting while XP is gained from killing and assisting in kills.

Conclusion.

And that's pretty much it. It may seem intimidating at first, but hopefully this guide has provided answers to most of your questions. If you're interesting in meeting other players, you may be interested in checking out /r/mecoop to connect with other players, ask questions, learn strategy, and make some friends.

by RepublicanShredder

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17. Miscellaneous Tips

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18. Bugs

The SR-2 cockpit has gained an unfortunate trap: when moving too close to Joker, it is possible to become stuck. This can be avoided by skirting to the left or right, only moving close enough to talk, or mashing buttons in case of becoming only partially stuck. In any case, it's best to quicksave right before entering the cockpit (F5, PC version) so you can quickload (F9, PC version) right out in case of catastrophic failure.

Enjoying the Omega DLC? Vanguard class? Don't use your biotic dash in an area where you're walking on pipes above empty space--if you clip through a wall, you will die instantly (before your leap), no save. This can make the area very annoying, but once past this bug never shows up again.

PC versions of games (especially when modded, modified or otherwise toyed with) are notoriously buggy. It's best to acquire a habit of saving manually after every mission, and quicksaving often. This can get you out of an unfortunate mission order or let you re-make a decision or, failing all else, extract you from a glitch. One way to tell how often to save is by asking yourself *would this really suck to have to do again?* If the answer is yes, save. Saving is only available outside of combat and off moving platforms.

by Hypersigils

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19. Finished Mass Effect 3

Step 1: Try Not to Cry. Step 2: Cry a Lot.

Here we are at the very end. Hope you made the right choices, because you probably changed life in the galaxy in very dramatic ways.

So, now what?

Well, as the title suggests, crying is always good. Sobbing in bed isn't bad. Wailing might be a little disconcerting, but anyone who's played the games will understand. And that's where you are right now: at the end of the road, end of Mass Eeffect 3, and now amongst people who've experienced the exact same thing you have. Stick around a bit, say your hellos. Tell us how much [insert character here] meant to you. Draw something. Write something. Sing or dance or blog or play something. Share your experience among those who understand.

The more you do, the more you'll realize the characters you've been playing with will live on forever in your head and heart. So stay awhile.